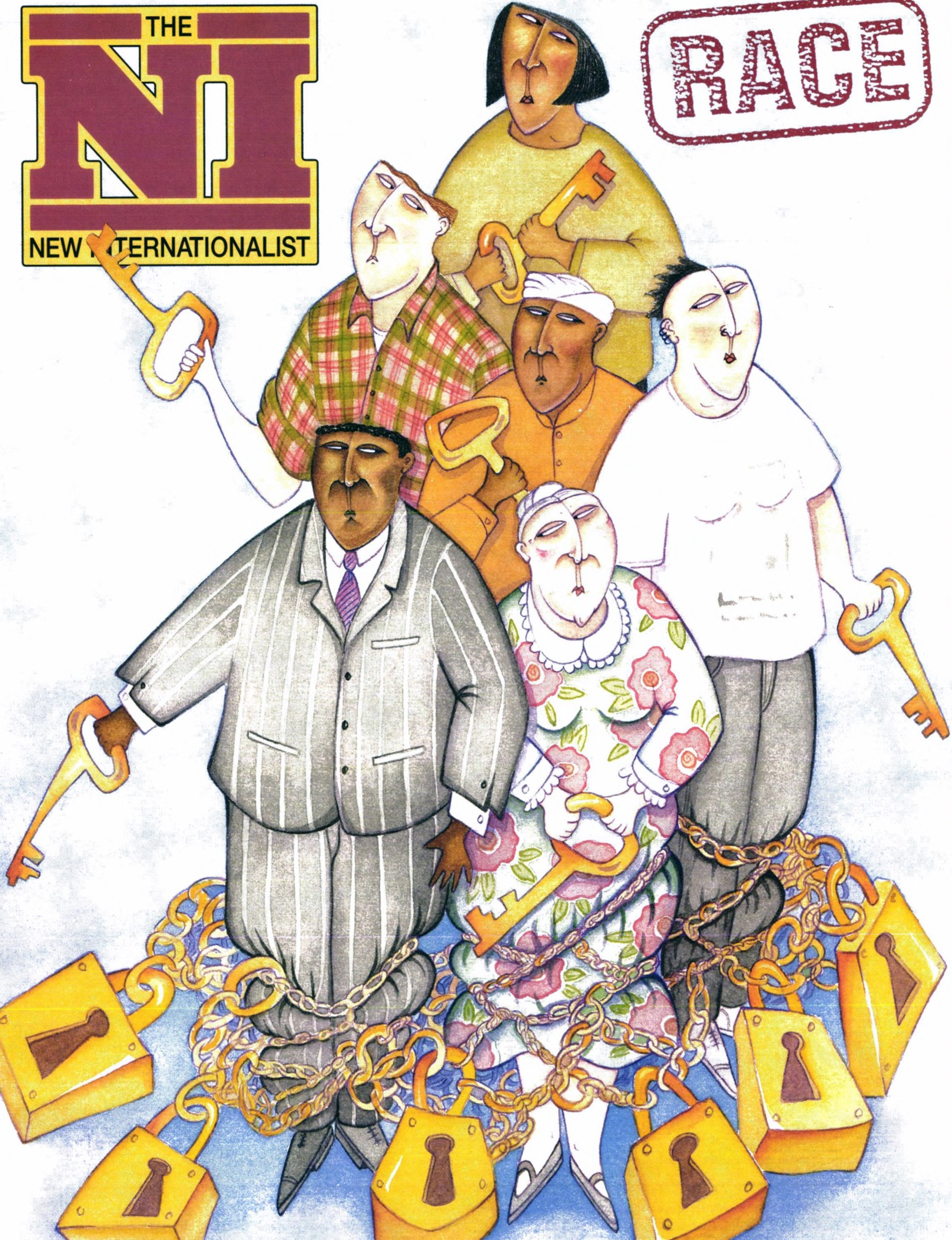
No. 260 / OCTOBER 1994

THE NI NEW INTERNATIONALIST

RACE



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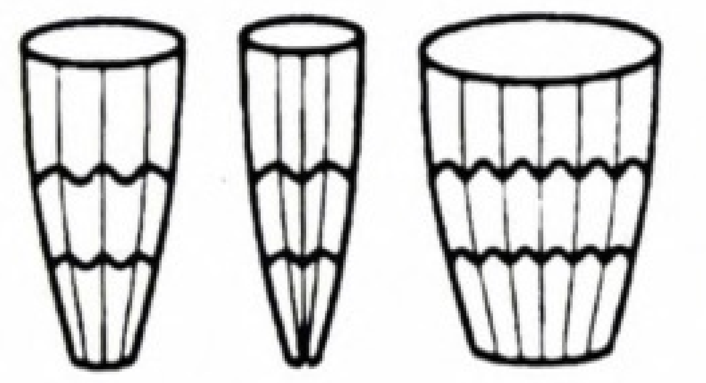

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FRONT COVER ILLUSTRATION BY **CHUM McLEOD**.
MAGAZINE DESIGNED BY **JIM TURNER.**

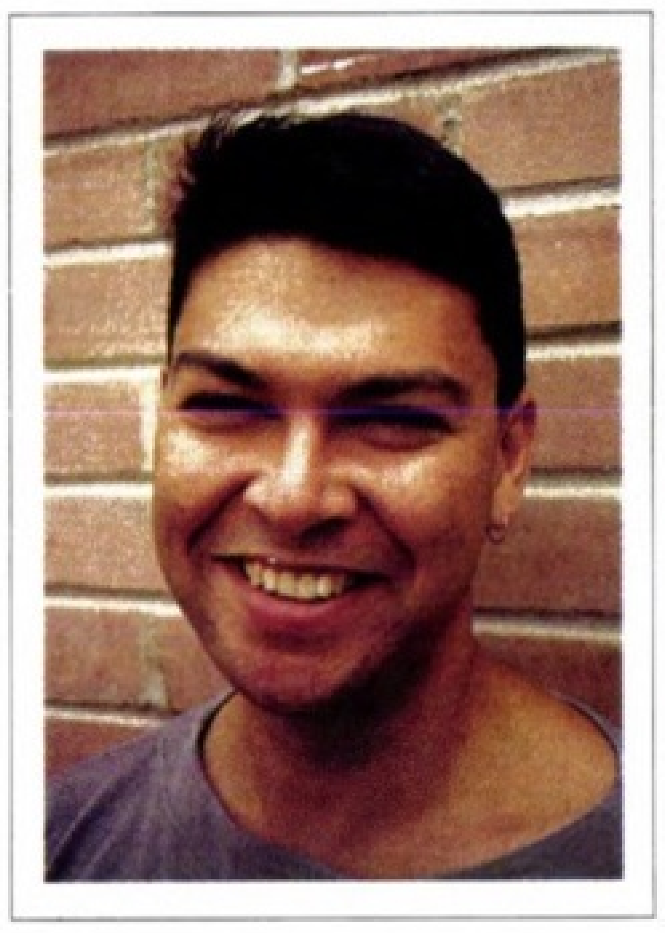
THIS MONTH'S **THEME**

Race

FROM THIS MONTH'S **EDITOR**

WORDS, words, words. The trickle of words began when this issue was first proposed. Everyone in the **NI** Co-op began conveying their ideas and opinions to me, sometimes over a cup of tea, sometimes in little scribbles down the margins of my proposal. Faxes arrived from across the oceans. Then came packages – some ominously heavy – from the helpful people I turned to during the course of my research. These contained news clippings, photocopied chapters, sometimes entire books. After this came the to-ing and fro-ing of letters between me and the writers I had asked to contribute to this issue. Then the articles started coming in, ready for editing, and it became a question of losing some words and worrying over which had alternative meanings lurking within them.

There are plenty of these around when talking about race. Many just get used routinely as though they didn't matter. White journalists often free-associate when writing about Africa, for example, and come up with uninspired clichés of the 'darkness visible' variety. A lot of the language we use ties up darker colours with negativity – a 'black mark' may be held against you, being 'blackballed' spells exclusion, and the worst day of your life may be, predictably enough, a 'black day'.



But even subtler language may signify racist control. When the United Nations was putting together a Draft Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples last year, the indigenous delegates had to stave off an attempt to put 'populations' rather than 'peoples' in the title. What's the difference? Well, under international law, only a distinct 'people' has the right to self-determination. The proposed change had been sponsored by the Aotearoa/New Zealand Government – no prizes for guessing which of the names they would rather use.

At a personal level I have a choice about what I call myself. I can choose between Asian, Indian or Black – or even go for all three. 'Asian' offers a large geographic region, many of whose cultures have little to do with my own. 'Indian' narrows that down a bit, but it comes loaded with the baggage of nationalism. 'Black' is fine in a political sense where it reflects my origins in the Majority World (or the Third World as some would have it) and solidarity with others on the same side of the race divide as myself. But if you're talking black as in skin colour... well, actually I'm brown. None of this means anything to certain louts who have been known to shout 'Paki bastard' at me.

Names, labels, words – if we all didn't have such a strong racial education in our societies, many of them wouldn't mean much. But as it is they are charged with the burden of meanings and associations that we have to unpack, work with, jettison or reclaim. So here goes...

Dinyar Godrej

Dinyar Godrej
for the New Internationalist Co-operative

Blunderers or manipulators?

You detail the disastrous policies of the World Bank and IMF (**NI 257**) without speculating on the motives of the members of these organizations. The reader is left with an impression of ivory towers full of well-meaning but tragically incompetent blunderers.

THE NI
NEW INTERNATIONALIST
Squeezing the South
World Bank, IMF, GATT...
50 years is enough
Special POSTER

But another interpretation fits the facts: some influential members may actually wish to *prevent* world development. It is quite impossible for the whole world to ever approach consumption levels of the 'developed' nations – there simply are not the natural resources to do so, nor can the planet cope with the resultant pollution.

A viable plan for true development will inevitably mean that those of us in developed countries will experience a significant reduction in consumption. Is it not possible that IMF and World Bank policies are dominated by those who see world development only as a threat to their own affluence?

Such speculations are probably unprovable but the implications are immense and the circumstantial evidence of 50 years of failure overwhelming. It is time for the World Bank and the IMF to prove their good intent – not for 'paranoids' like myself to demonstrate that their apparent incompetent failure may, for some cruel manipulators, be competent success.

David Riebold
Lanzarote, Spain

VIV QUILLIN

Clear writing

The **New Internationalist** welcomes your letters. But please keep them short. They may be edited for purposes of space or clarity. Include a home telephone number if possible and send your letters to the nearest editorial office. The address is inside the front cover.

I found your issue on the Media (**NI 256**) much more readable than most of your other issues. As a geography student I get fed up with having to study each paragraph in order to clarify exactly what it is trying to say. I do not think that 'window dressing' each sentence with as many unusual adjectives and analogies as possible adds anything to the descriptive value of the piece.

So please keep articles like those from Sarah Stewart ('No Pablo, no story') and Andrea Goodall ('You can be sure of Shell') coming. They are interesting, factual and clear – not simply writing for writing's sake!

A Clements
Newbury, UK

Best of NI

I'm a slow reader, especially when I'm enthralled. Your issue on *Death without weeping* (**NI 254**) was a superb example of the best of **NI.** Nancy Scheper-Hughes's humanity and sensitivity shine through and her style is captivating. I'm tempted to go for the big book itself. How long would that take me?

I'm always fond of Brick's cartoons and illustrations, so all-in-all, **NI 254** can't be beat!

Bill Badham
Nottingham, UK

Wishful thinking

It seems to me that David Pearce (*Letters* **NI 258**) missed the whole point of doing an issue on the taboo subject of Northern Ireland. To my mind the history of the conflict was presented with clarity. Mr Pearce is correct in stating that the British Army did not commit the acts he refers to but misses a very important point, namely that when paramilitaries are caught they will be brought to justice. This is not the case with the perpetrators of British Army violence. The British Government still claims that the victims of Bloody Sunday were gunmen and bombers! There are numerous other cases where the RUC and the Army have got away with murder. I recommend a book written by Martin Dillon entitled *The Dirty War.*

Finally, Mr Pearce clearly infers that persons or publications that question the British role in Ireland are IRA supporters. I suppose it was a case of wishful thinking to expect this kind of attitude to become less prevalent.

Jason King,
Glasgow, Scotland, UK

Ed: we would be grateful for David Pearce's address so that we can reply to him.

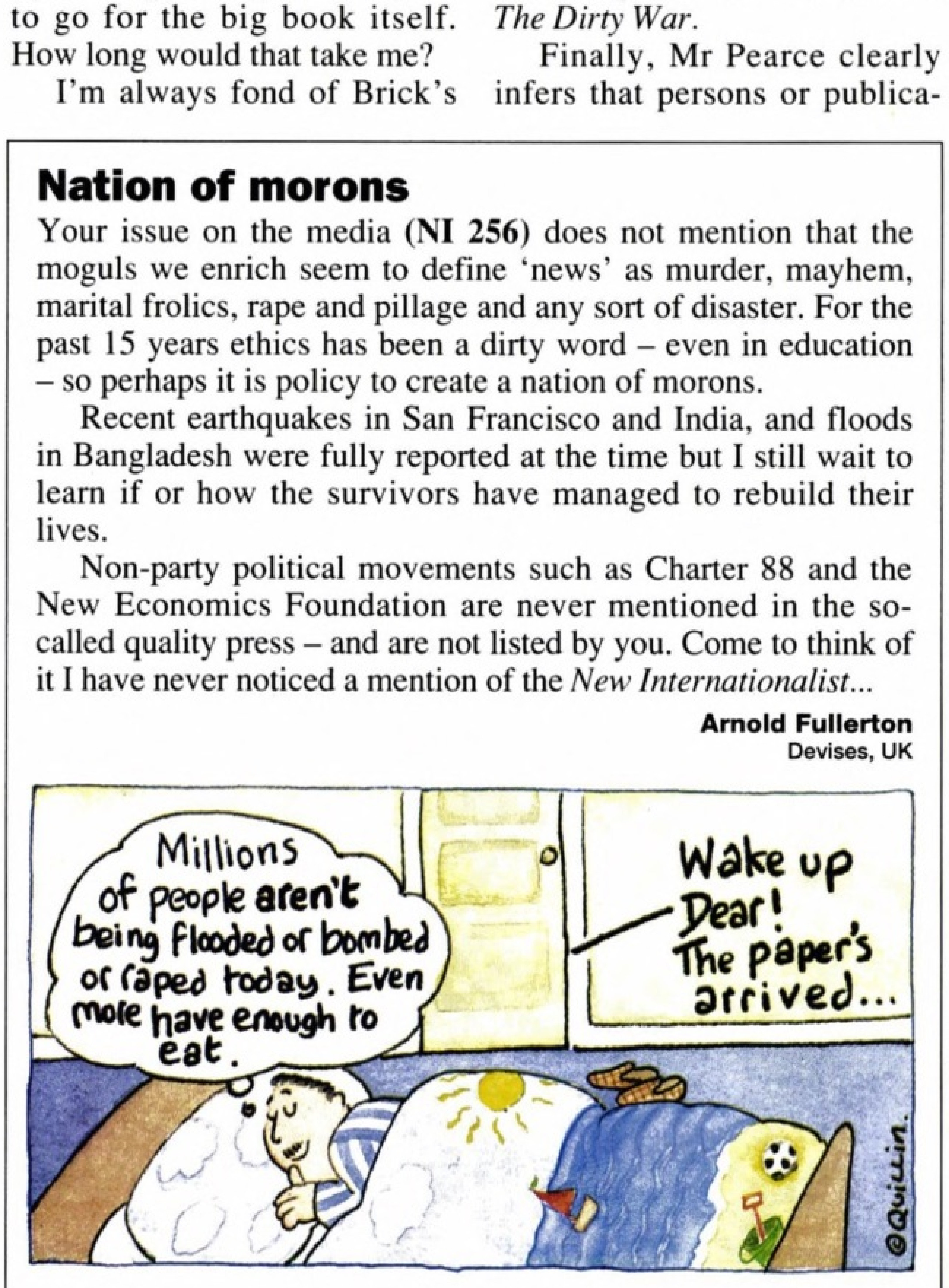
Nation of morons

Your issue on the media (**NI 256**) does not mention that the moguls we enrich seem to define 'news' as murder, mayhem, marital frolics, rape and pillage and any sort of disaster. For the past 15 years ethics has been a dirty word – even in education – so perhaps it is policy to create a nation of morons.

Recent earthquakes in San Francisco and India, and floods in Bangladesh were fully reported at the time but I still wait to learn if or how the survivors have managed to rebuild their lives.

Non-party political movements such as Charter 88 and the New Economics Foundation are never mentioned in the so-called quality press – and are not listed by you. Come to think of it I have never noticed a mention of the *New Internationalist...*

Arnold Fullerton
Devises, UK


Millions of people aren't being flooded or bombed or raped today. Even more have enough to eat.
Wake up Dear! The paper's arrived...
©Quillin

Brain-drain

A recent *Letter from Lagos* (**NI 257**) covered the 'brain-drain' from Nigeria to the UK. This extract from the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee has relevance – if we are prepared to see it. It is from the Director-General of UNESCO, Professor Federico Mayor, to David Sumberg MP:

'I realized that with our modalities of long-term scholarships we were worsening the rate of brain-drain because we were providing specialists in the developing countries with the opportunity to spend many years in developed countries. The result is that today we have in the rich countries 30,000 PhDs from sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore we realized that we had to alter our approach to development – the approach to development based on structural adjustment that has been applied with the same formula to different countries. In many cases, particularly for the poorest countries, the results were very negative.'

Harold Chamings
Sheffield, UK

Anti-Serb bias

Your article 'Not our war' in the issue on the Media (**NI 256**) had a pro-Croatian bias. I follow the conflict through the *Scandinavian Guardian* and the Danish paper *Information,* which is the only paper in Scandinavia with reporters on all sides. It is obvious that the information in the Western press is much more biased than during the Gulf War – with both the Serbs and the truth as victims. All three parties in former Yugoslavia use American PR-firms, and the Moslems and the Croats especially have good access to the Western media, to the Serbs' disfavour.

Information had a series of

articles earlier this year documenting anti-Serb lies in the Western media. Would this be an idea for the **NI**, to avoid bias?

Hartvig Saetra
Storslett, Norway

Vaccination

I have been disturbed to read letters in recent months in the **NI** praising vaccination. The trend from when many of the now-extinct or very rare diseases were first discovered, to when they died out, is a downward one. Vaccines were introduced toward the latter part of this trend. This would point to better sanitation and hygiene rather than vaccination as the cause of their demise.

Vaccination has serious consequences, some of which take a long time to develop. We appear to have decreased the incidence of curable diseases such as whooping cough, mumps and rubella, merely to replace them with the incurables – cancer, arthritis and AIDS.

The basis of vaccination originates from the findings of Louis Pasteur. His contemporary, Antoine Beauchamp, produced a completely different theory, the basis of which is that the health of individuals is the main factor in the development of disease, and not the action of bacteria.

Vaccinations are certainly not as safe as orthodox medical practitioners via multinational drug companies would have us believe.

Robert Sier
Sowerby Bridge, Yorkshire, UK

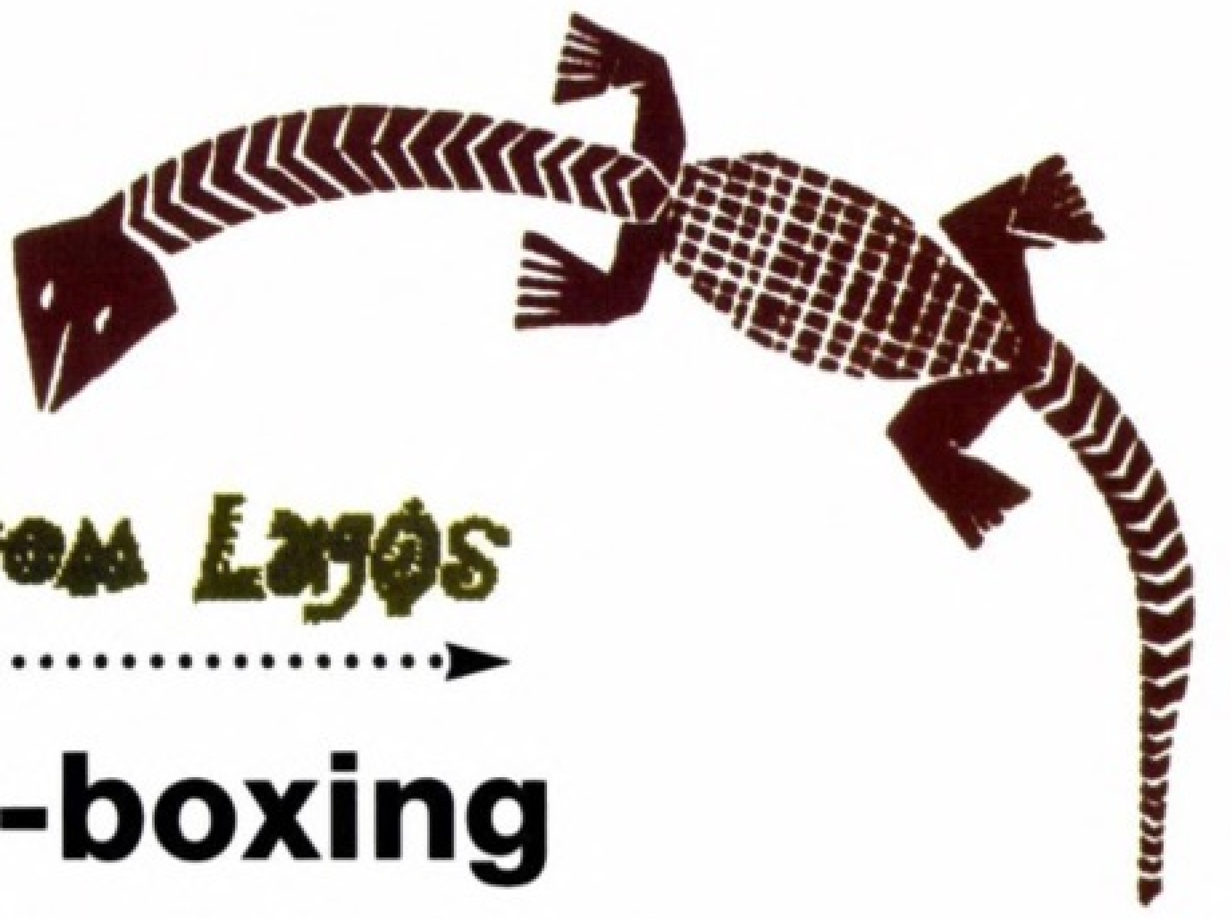
Real guy

Discovery! I had never heard of **NI** until the other day when, staying overnight with the Columban Fathers in their house in Manila, I found a copy of the issue on Mexico **(NI 251)** in my room.

Reading the editorial, I said to myself: 'This guy's for real!' Next day, reading the rest of the magazine, I had the same sense of people involved with reality. And tough and unpleasant as it may be, we all want to live in the real world.

Rev George Carlin
Holy Hearts House of Prayer
Manila, Philippines

The views expressed on the letters page are not necessarily those of the NI.



Letter from Lagos

Shadow-boxing

The ethnic card is being played by those in power in Nigeria. **Elizabeth Obadina** holds her breath and prays that this does not herald another Biafra.

As an academic, as a journalist, and as a foreigner, I have commented on difficult situations with an ethnic dimension. I have met with people who for one reason or another are deeply afraid. Sometimes I cried and felt sick – but I would edit out the tears from a broadcasting package or written despatch. I never internalized those outrages – they weren't my problem. I could only ape Solomon and attempt balanced and unprejudiced comment, often coming down firmly on one side or another after weighing up all the facts.

Recent events in Nigeria have changed me. They have given me the unpleasant experience of being a player rather than a mere spectator. At the time of writing nothing too terrible, measured on the scale of human dreadfulness, has happened. For a military regime the Nigerian Government's reaction to week upon week of pro-democracy strikes and demonstrations has been quite mild. In the south a handful of demonstrators have died in scattered protests. Some opposition leaders have been imprisoned but most were quickly released. The Nigerian 'soldier-boys' seem not to be cast from the same mould as Latin American military dictators or sergeants-turned-despots like Idi Amin, Bokassa and Samuel Doe.

ILLUSTRATION: MIRIAM McCURDY

Both the northern Hausa-backed military élite and the largely southern-based pro-democracy campaigners appear to be mindful of the Biafran war. It is nearly 30 years now since that conflict claimed a million Nigerian lives and introduced the world to the now-familiar imagery of starving African refugees and children. No-one wants to commit the first atrocity, to risk a repeat of that terrible ethnic bloodbath.

In late July, the ethnic card was played. Moshood Abiola, the Yoruba winner of last year's cancelled presidential elections, was arrested by the police. It was a time of shadow-boxing for most Nigerians. Lagos's six million inhabitants held their breath expecting the worst, but no catastrophe occurred.

Last year, when the military annulled the elections, everyone dashed fearfully back to their 'ethnic' home areas. This year they sat tight. 'Who has the money to go home for holidays, let alone to pack out and pack back every time there is trouble?', said my friend Noney who comes from the eastern Igbo city Emugu. For myself, I felt profound relief that my husband's veins are half-full of Yoruba blood and my children's therefore a quarter-full. Most importantly in Nigeria, as that blood is paternally inherited and therefore significant, they are considered to be entirely Yoruba. Lagos is a Yoruba city and so they are safe, ethnically secure.

Ethnic security has become a factor to be dealt with in our family life. I could never rest easy if my children should choose to go to school or university or to work in Northern Nigeria. Ironic really since my first love for Nigeria was born in its northern states in 1974 where I worked as an expatriate foreigner. I loved the whole area. My husband too, after years of living in London, preferred to holiday in the North with Hausa friends rather than face the drastic pleasures of his Lagos home.

Now an evil ethnic wedge is being forced between Nigeria's 200-odd ethnic groups. Ties of inter-ethnic friendship, preferences for environments other than your ancestral ones, and the urge to better your employment wherever the job may be, are being perverted by ethnicity.

Unfortunately this is partly due to some well-intentioned Government schemes to provide equal educational opportunities throughout Nigeria. Public services and government-sponsored employment are ethnically balanced. This has nurtured ethnic sensibilities which might otherwise have been subsumed by a wider identity as a 'Nigerian citizen'.

At the root of current concern for ethnic identity lies, inevitably, the desire for power and money. Political power in Nigeria was vested by British colonialists in the hands of the feudal northern aristocracy and 90 per cent of Government income comes from southern oil sales. It is an explosive combination exacerbated by worsening poverty. No ruler wants to lose their hold on the purse strings. Every poverty-stricken area feels hard-done by. Ethnic blame is easy to apportion. But as greedy politicians and generals heighten ethnic awareness, Nigeria's 90 million ordinary citizens quake in their shoes.

Bello, the technician at my husband Tunde's workplace, discarded his Hausa-style clothes in late July. He now sports Western or Yoruba-style dress. When teased about this, he replies: 'You may laugh but this may become a life-or-death-issue – sooner rather than later'. ■

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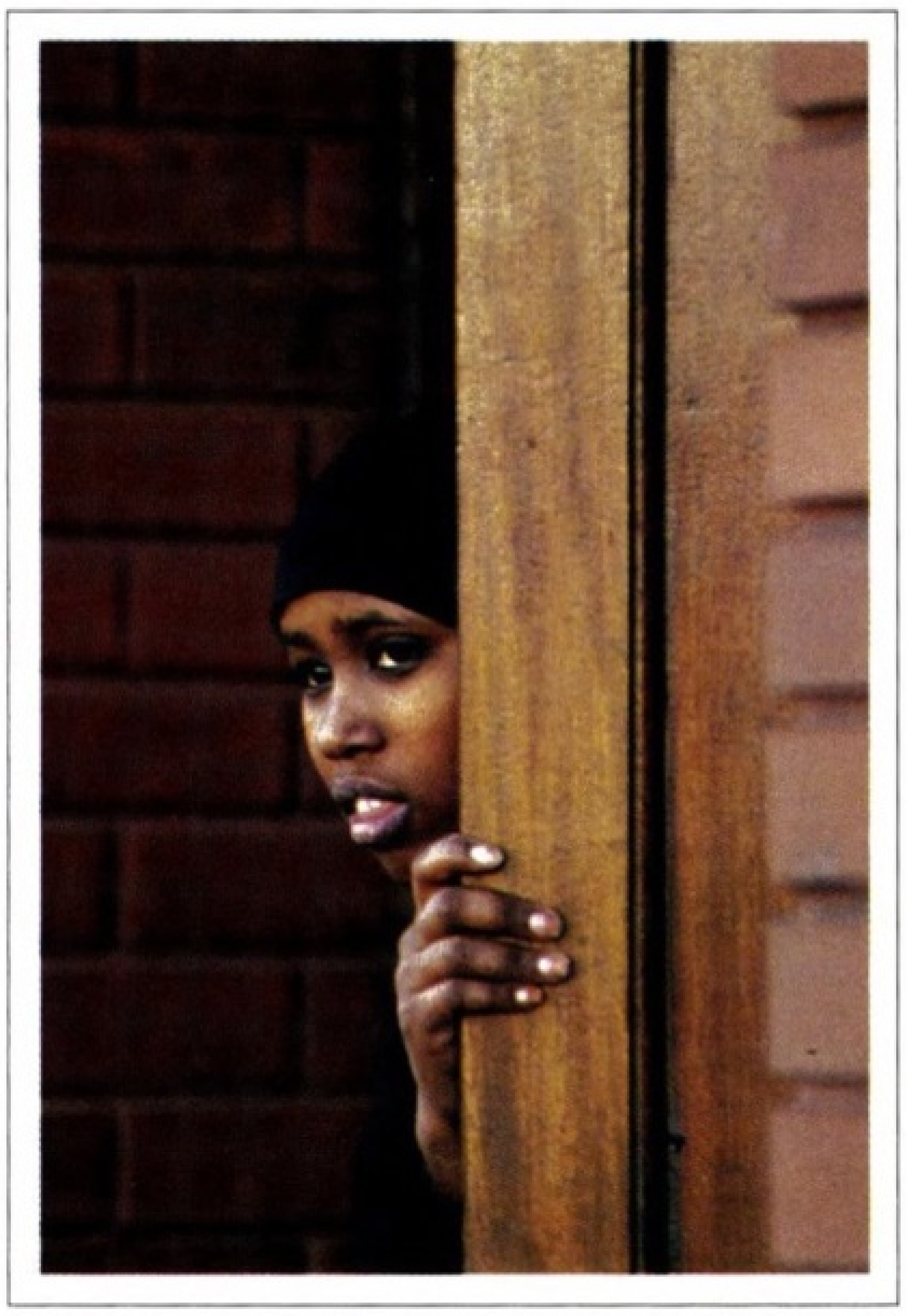
Race

Unlocking prejudice



DAVID HOFFMAN

*Nonsense flies thick and fast when the subject is race and racism. But is the idea of race itself a nonsense? **Dinyar Godrej** sets about trying to dismantle one of humankind's most damaging devices.*

HERE is a story of pollution. Once when I was very little – little enough not to remember how little - I got into a temper with my best friend. Running out of appropriate words of abuse and suffering under the blazing afternoon sun while he kept his cool and smirked, I was close to letting my fists do the talking.

Regrettably my brain offered one final jibe it thought might work. Before I could consider, it had tumbled from my mouth: 'Nigger lover!'

'Tumbled' is perhaps inappropriate. The words stuck like fur on my tongue long after I had uttered them. My entire being felt soiled by the filth I had brought to aid my now insignificant anger. It made little difference that my friend remained unshaken by this ultimate missile. It had devastated me.

It was also ridiculous. We were two schoolboys in the heartland of the Malwa plateau of central India – 'nigger' should have been a useless word for us. My friend, returned for his schooling from the Indian diaspora in Zambia, should have been infuriated. And how can 'loving' someone be reason for hatred?

The guilt returns every time I remember the incident. And with it comes a different kind of anger, deeper and more durable. It is an anger against everything that had colluded to prompt those words to a child. The insidious learning of racism which comes about through our friends and families, the films we watch, the stories we hear, the education we get, the line our politicians peddle.

Come to think of it, reading about Sandy and Sue Smith every day from our British English textbooks didn't do wonders for my own self-image either. One study has indicated that children as young as three learn to perceive overt ethnic differences and by seven the smallest details of ethnic variation are recognized.[1]

Those of us with a less than cosy vision of childhood wish there was a way of knowing, before rather than after, the myriad ways by which our racialization occurs; before we are carrying our burdens of pain, guilt and – in the case of 'out' racists – hatred.

Because racism affects both offender and victim, albeit unequally. Racist societies are literally sick societies. Their myopia will not let them see that their economic woes are due to economic

PENNY TWEEDIE / PANOS PICTURES

True colours of the Aboriginal flag: despite racist propaganda, Australian history did not begin with the arrival of Europeans. Left: seeking sactuary in a mosque in London as neo-Nazis pass by.

policies rather than scapegoats: they bear the ulcers of violence, mistrust and inequality. The racist is chained to hatred; it defines and controls. For the person subject to race hatred, every social interaction can be a reminder.

Staying power

But what exactly do we mean by race and racism?

Many of us automatically think of the continued disadvantage and persecution wrought on people of colour by whites. However, the idea of race is not just about the colour of one's skin but also about ethnicity which takes into account physical features, language, religion, ideas of nation and culture. These are the things people use to define themselves as a group. Often when people refer to different races they use now one criterion, now another. Academics are increasingly putting the word 'race' in quotation marks to show that it is an ill-defined and misleading term.

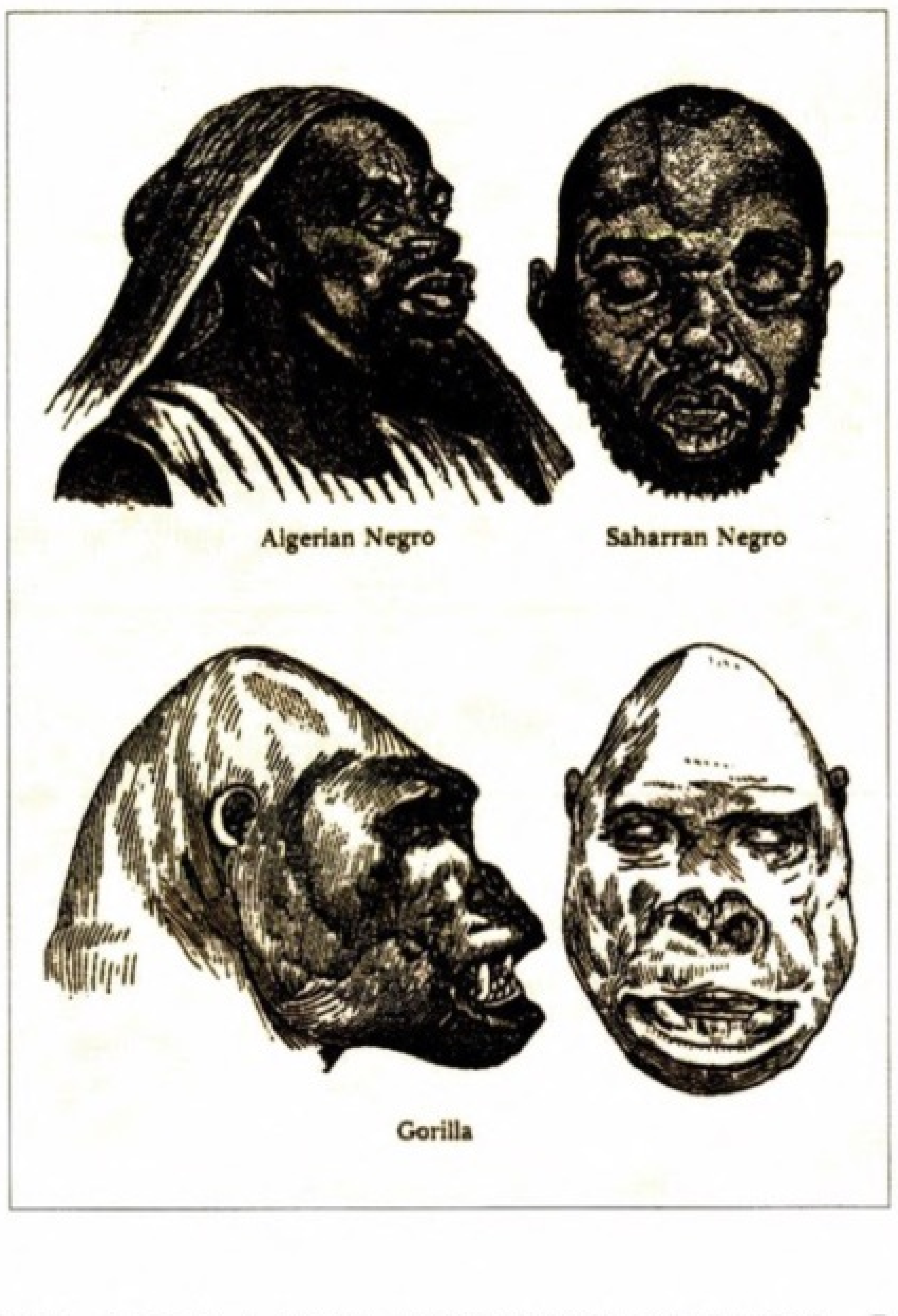
More clear is how the notion of race is used. Racism is about people from dominant groups exerting their power unjustly over others. The only justification they can offer for their behaviour is that they belong to a 'superior' race.

In the past racist science attempted to prove this. Many of us have, lurking at the back of our minds, the idea of four distinct races with specific physical characteristics: Negroid, Caucasian, Asian and Mongoloid. I had the misfortune to be taught this in Geography class at school. Despite the staying power of such pseudoscientific mumbo, the facts are very different. The genetic differences *within* such so-called 'races' are greater than those *between* them. All people on our planet come from common genetic stock.

It is not surprising that such racial classification flourished in the colonial heyday when 'inferior' races were exploited in the most inhuman way possible. Nineteenth-century scientists were busy trying to prove the similarity between Africans and apes. At least 30 million Africans were killed as they were brought to the New World packed in chains into the holds of slave ships.[2] That's about the number of African Americans in the US today. Denial of their humanity was an important justification for this slaughter. The marked difference in skin colour was used to support this excuse.

But skin colour and physical features have no meaning in themselves. They gain importance when society loads them with social and cultural significance. The idea of race has always been a social construct. Once it takes root it permeates not just into our minds but into our governments, judiciaries, economies, media and education

A false 'scientific' attempt to link Africans with apes. From Nott and Gliddon, *Types of Mankind* (*sic*), 1854.



systems. It carries on relentlessly trailing disadvantage in its wake.

Turning the screw

Consider how racism lives on in former colonies. The South American continent, especially Latin America, is a case in point. Black descendants of African slaves are on the lowest rungs of social and economic hierarchies, often segregated in distinct geographical areas. Blacks can only move up in society through a process called *blanqueamiento* or 'whitening'. This involves black people internalizing the racism they experience and marrying 'up' along the colour line so that their children may have a better chance.

But it doesn't end with colour. Racism directed against Jews has never been about colour and it is alive and well in South America – as in several other parts of the world. By a perverse misreading of the Bible it is claimed that the Jews are a distinct race because of their 'tainted' blood. Such theories caused widespread persecution of Jews in medieval Europe. The Nazis killed six million Jews in a racial holocaust when the real issue was German nationalism. Today in South America anti-Semitic propaganda is the safety valve for regimes with discontented populations. In Argentina rumours are circulating of an Israeli plot to use parts of mountainous Patagonia as a gigantic freezer for Jewish produce.[3] The Government turns the screw on the population at large, the population blames Jews, the status quo is maintained.

But if the Jews were all one race in this sense, they should be one big happy family. Instead recent Israeli news reports have drawn attention to Jews of Ethiopian origin encountering racism from white Jews.

Race continues to mean now one thing, now another because it has no meaning in itself. To make sense out of the nonsense one has to look for the real reasons behind the racial ones. We need only look at the changing face of racism in Europe. Banding together in prosperous nation states, Fortress Europe is hostile not just to non-white people but to poor whites from Eastern Europe as well. 'Foreigners' are the victims of this new super-nationalism. Culture replaces skin colour – something the Irish in the UK have always known. Ethnic discrimination and racial discrimination become the same thing.

Race continues to mean now one thing, now another because it has no meaning in itself.

Links in the chain

The visible face of all this fractiousness is the racist on the street spraying graffito on a wall or pushing excrement through a letter box. But racism is not just about bad behaviour on a personal level; it percolates into all our social systems. The largest of these systems are the state and governments. In the West state racism is well documented. During the recent European recession politicians have blamed immigrants and refugees, pitting poor people against each other when the economy, not race, is the real problem. Far-Right politicians fuel far-Right hate groups and racist violence erupts to no-one's great surprise.

In the Majority World the racist state is often the nation state – which itself is a Western concept. The rhetoric is of building ethnic unity within a single strong nation. The practice is that the dominant group's values take over 'national' values – difference gets punished.

Since World War Two around 40 ethnic groups have been the victims of state-sponsored mass murder. The death toll exceeds the combined deaths in international, colonial and civil wars. The news media calls it 'ethnic conflict'. But the conflict is usually about political, economic or social power between people who have come to identify each other in ethnic terms.[4]

The nation state is particularly unfriendly to minorities that live on its margins, as the world-wide crisis of indigenous peoples testifies. If they are not being subjected to genocidal repression they are being bludgeoned into servitude to dominant groups. In the case of the Nuba of Sudan, their

I am Rwandese

I KNOW people are interested in knowing whether you are a Tutsi, Hutu or a Twa. I happen to be a Tutsi. I prefer, though, to be called Rwandese.

When the German and the Belgian colonizers came, Rwanda had one nation – one people sharing the same language, the same political system and the same religion..

The Belgians found a system of highly-organized local communities and explained it to themselves in terms of what they were familiar with – the framework of lords and servants.

They said: 'Whoever has more than 10 cows is Tutsi, whoever has less is a Hutu.' As to defining a Twa: 'Well a Twa is a Twa. Full stop.'

Because Tutsis were seen to be like the lords of medieval Europe the Belgians thought: 'We can work with them. We can put them in a position to rule.' They created the gap and then reinforced it by schooling sons of Tutsi chiefs for leadership. The Hutu 'peasantry' were schooled for priesthood. There was no education for women...

Physical stereotyping took place too. The first missionaries wrote things like: 'We met Tutsi who are tall...' People came along with instruments to measure nose length and width. This was nonsense – but the stereotyping persists today. A report from the recent war describes it as 'a war between the tall and the short people'.

When the Tutsi and the Hutu élite started asking for independence the Belgians told the Hutus: 'Look, the Tutsis have reached a good level of wealth and education. now they want us to leave the country to them. They will exploit you.' In 1958 a very pro-Hutu party called PARMEHUTU was created with the help of the colonialists. Tutsis and pro-independence Hutus were killed and the first wave of refugees left.

Reporters say there have been generations of hatred between the two, which is totally wrong. I saw it start in 1959. From then to the present day there have been many conflicts.

After independence in 1962 a communal kind of government was set up. Those who were excluded by the PARMEHUTU came back from exile in 1963, 1964 and 1967. And every time there were massacres. I remember going for Christmas holidays from my school in December 1963. In my class there were six children from Gikongoro. Only one of them came back. All the others were killed.

The 1973 coup brought President Habyarimana to power. 'National unity' was his aim – but he soon forgot this. He started the politics of exclusion again, privileging Hutus from the North. The West chose to ignore this.

After the plane crash killed him, reporters talked about the Hutus and the Tutsis and referred to the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) as a Tutsi organization, ignoring the fact that it includes Twa and Hutu officers.

The UN said: 'Let's take our people out, we don't want them dying in a tribal conflict'. So the killers went on killing with impunity.

What is happening in Rwanda needs to be addressed not in terms of ethnicity but in terms of who the killers are. Ethnicity is a part of the problem because it has been created to be part of the problem. Because of brainwashing, it has taken on an independent life.

The big challenge for the Government is to kick out the racism that simplifies the whole situation to one equation – the Hutu and Tutsi, always forgetting the Twa. If the Government is clear that the political problem is about maintaining peace and justice for all then it can succeed.

We need to teach people how to read and write; to get them informed so that they can learn about democracy, human rights and respect for minorities.

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identity is threatened with obliteration. The Nuba are being forcibly moved to labour camps or to households of Sudanese Arabs to work as servants by the Government of Kardofan State. In 1992 tens of thousands were being moved monthly. Their traditions are forbidden and their languages and dialects – over 50 in all – will probably fall silent. At present the Nuba Mountains are sealed off to all outsiders.[5]

If states and governments are racist then it is no surprise that other social institutions are as well. At a recent people's tribunal against racist violence in London I heard a string of nightmarish accounts of wrongful arrests, unequal sentences, beatings and abuse by the guardians of the law. All this was coupled with lethargy in acting upon serious crimes where the victim had a dark skin or was a 'foreigner'.

In the workplace minority communities get the worst jobs, have the highest rates of unemployment and may even be enslaved – in Mauritania out of a total population of two million about 90,000 black people live as slaves to Berbers.[6] Minority groups have worse access to state services – like the old Maya woman in Guatemala who told a foreign aid worker there was no point in going to the hospital, the doctor wouldn't see her.[7] They are caricatured by the media or rendered invisible – if *Neighbours* were Australia you could be forgiven for thinking only white people lived there. In education anti-racist teaching is low on the agenda and the barrage of the dominant culture continues.

The cumulative force of all this corrodes the conscience, makes it acquiesce, until you are left with the absurdity of an Indian child shouting 'Nigger lover!' across a playground.

Beyond privilege

You and I might not consider ourselves personally to be racists. But racism is about much more than personalities; it is about privilege. In a racist society all our social structures become polluted, privileging dominant groups at the expense of all others. Therein lies its rationale. Building our societies around competition rather than co-operation we continually reinvent racism. It's not some primitive remnant; we are continually learning and teaching it. So it's not enough to be against the racist on the street – though that helps. We have to push for change at every level. Societies and systems are changing all the time and ordinary people are changing them.

We may be involved in political action without being aware of it. Usually we grab hold of one end of a vast system that's troubling us and pull it in the direction we'd like it to go. If we are to be committed to anti-racism, we cannot let ourselves be disempowered by the magnitude of the problems or languish in guilt. It's a question of pulling from our own corner – telling local politicians what we think about them, complaining about biased reporting in the paper we read, protesting against tokenistic or culturally insensitive education, helping to improve the atmosphere at our workplace, supporting local campaigns against racial injustice.

Forced to wear clothing by the Government of Sudan, the Nuba nonetheless have created a unique identity.

PETER MOSYUSKI / PANOS PICTURES

Some countries are setting examples too. In Mauritius, which has several ethnic groups, the job market is moving from being segregated along ethnic lines to getting the best person for the job. Its numerous languages and peoples are heard and seen on television. Education is free. Interethnic marriages and relationships are growing. But growing ethnic equality doesn't mean everyone shares the same culture now. Cultures in Mauritius remain distinct and yet reasonably integrated.

Integration is about equality and not sameness. Attempting to dismantle the idea of race in society involves seeking out the reasons why race gets used to disguise other problems. It does not mean flattening out difference but creating equity at every level of society. It means being able to see through racial lies and treating cultural and other differences equally. It also means being able to criticize cultural baggage including that of our own culture.

All too often in the name of integration minorities are required to deny their entire way of life and conform to the majority culture. They are browbeaten for not trying hard enough. They are told to 'fit into' a society that may be openly hostile to them and gives them scant respect. Such 'integration' is like trying to press rocks through a sieve.

If we are to talk of integration we must recognize that the race problem is created and maintained by those privileged by racism even though the disadvantaged are usually blamed. The challenge then is to look squarely at this unfair privilege – especially if it benefits us – and to make the effort to understand how it affects people across the divides of colour, culture, language and religion. This means tackling not only racist inequalities within societies but also those between countries, for economic colonialism today carries on the racist traditions of imperial colonialism, binding people of the majority world with the shackles of unfair trade and debt extraction.

Only then can we start unlocking the device that does us all such physical, emotional, social and moral damage. ■

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1 The Working Group Against Racism in Children's Resources Newsletter, No 3, Summer 1991. **2** Center for Democratic Renewal, *When Hate Groups Come to Town*, CDR (Montgomery, Alabama, 1992). **3** Judith Laikin Elkin, 'Colonial Legacy of Anti-Semitism', *Report on the Americas*, Vol 25 No 4, February 1992. **4** See Rodolfo Stavenhagen, *The Ethnic Question*, UNUP (Tokyo, 1990). **5** Human Rights Watch/Africa and Survival International. **6** *International Herald Tribune* 14 July 1994. **7** Indigenous Guatemalans are not numerically a minority but their share of power makes them one.

RON HAVIV / SABA-REA / KATZ PICTURES

More than Jimmy's taxi

Apartheid is officially dead. Now South Africans have the awesome task of dismantling racism. ***Ferial Haffajee*** *finds people doing it in daring and imaginative ways.*

A TAXI to Soweto. All aboard for Jimmy's 'Face to Face' Tours into the heartland of black South Africa, into the country's largest township.

First stop Baragwanath hospital – Africa's biggest. Then on to Winnie Mandela's grand mansion. Next, a squatter camp. Then to the traditional slaughter of an ox as thanksgiving to the ancestors. Finally to an authentic *shebeen* for a pint of home-brewed beer swigged from a calabash.

Then it's back to Johannesburg's Carlton Hotel. All this for only R75 (about $22). Jimmy's onto a good thing. The tourists are queuing.

But just a sec... those accents sound very South African. They are. South African tourists – strangers to large parts of their own country, as much in awe of this 'Face to Face' tour as the tourists who arrived on an aeroplane.

Apartheid's aim was literally to 'keep people apart'. It created societies and communities that remain divided by colour, by class, by pride and by prejudice. That's why South Africans are taking tours to find out about each other.

For many whites it was the first time they had set foot in a black area...

Grand apartheid may have been wiped from the statute books. We all voted in April; our new multicoloured flag flies high and proud everywhere. Our new parliament is sitting and it's a much more colourful parliament. But to pretend that this is the end of South Africa's racial problems is naive.

Now the real work starts. Racism must be dismantled and a nation built from the ashes of apartheid. It's a lovely ideal, a noble thought. But how do you do it? It's certainly going to take more than Jimmy and his touring taxi.

South Africa's non-governmental organizations know this. High on many of their agendas for the next three years are items like 'citizenship training', 'community dialogue', and 'managing diversity'. These are all euphemisms for projects which tackle racism in its many forms: in communities, in the army and police force and in the workplace.

At a training centre outside Johannesburg, Bongani Ndaba and Vhonani Mufamadi show a mixed group of workers a photograph of a pot-bellied, ruddy faced white man.

'What is his name?' they ask the group. 'Johannes' – a typical Afrikaans name – guesses one of the group. 'What does he do?' the two young trainers continue. 'He's a member of the AWB [the racist far-Right political organization]?' guesses a black clerk. 'What sort of family do you think he comes from?' 'He's probably got six children,' ventures a young woman, half joking, half not, 'and his wife's probably an alcoholic.'

The man in the picture is in fact an African National Congress member and the trusted bodyguard of one of the organization's senior leaders. 'We are getting people to question their assumptions,' say Ndaba and Mufamadi who are part of a team of human resource consultants called Absolute.

The ANC man in the picture always helps to break the ice in their workshops. The exercise lets people laugh at themselves and their assumptions, enabling them to confront their prejudices in a non-threatening way. They also use a picture of an Umkhonto we Sizwe soldier – a member of the ANC's now disbanded army – with an AK-47 slung over his arm and ask the group to classify him as 'freedom fighter' or 'terrorist'.

The Absolute team's catchline is straightforward: 'a part not apart'. 'We are sensitizing people to diversity and differences. All aspects of diversity like race, gender and sexual orientation,' says Ndaba. 'We help organizations and companies to value and manage diversity.'

The trainers also get participants to tell their life-stories, to tell their colleagues who their grandparents and their parents are, how they live and what their families are like.

'By creating life-stories of ordinary people we help people realize that the past is what shapes the future and determines the role we play in society,' says Mufamadi. 'This tends to carry the message of differences. It unearths the subtle, because you're not just talking about black and white.'

Stories help to start a discussion on families. Ndaba and Mufamadi try to bring home to the group that there are many types of families in South Africa. Many white South Africans tend to measure acceptable standards of behaviour by the nuclear family. This is so evident at dinner table conversations that it's become a bit of a caricature. 'I don't mind having black neighbours – as long as they don't bring their aunties, uncles and grannies to live with them,' is a typical statement.

'We try to show that the migrant worker's family, the single parent family and the extended family are as South African as the nuclear family,' says Ndaba.

He adds: 'Even if people have been working together for 10 or 15 years they don't know each other. We found that it's more powerful to get them to talk about themselves than to lecture them.'

'Even if people have been working together for 10 or 15 years they don't know each other. We found that it's more powerful to get them to talk about themselves than to lecture them'

Ndaba says that although the project is young its popularity is growing. Its added value is that it is a home-grown product. Most workplace diversity programmes available in South Africa are imported from the United States.

Another programme which uses life stories in anti-racism workshops is the Institute for Democratic Alternatives for South Africa's (Idasa) Youth Project which brings together for a weekend young leaders of all of the country's political formations from far left to far right.

The Idasa trainers get a black person and a white person to draw up each other's 'timelines' or short histories. 'This creates discussion and debate about people's different backgrounds,' says Geoff Brown, one of the co-ordinators of the project.

Things can get quite hairy at these meetings. Jackie Seroke, a young and militant leader of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), opened the last meeting with: 'A good settler is a dead settler.' 'Settler' is the PAC word for white South Africans and this got many of the whites at the workshop very upset, especially a young white soldier, Mark Malan, from the South African Defence Force (SADF). But instead of nipping the uncomfortable discussion in the bud the trainers let the episode run its course, encouraging a no-holds-barred exchange. Brown thinks that this sort of catharsis through open – and often angry – discussion is necessary. It clears the air and helps to establish trust among participants who usually come to the meetings and at first huddle in their own racially segregated groupings.

The second stage of the meeting was a role-playing exercise involving a political

Children in South Africa: weighed down by an inheritance of hatred at a racist AWB rally (below); buoyed up by election euphoria (left).

MARTIN POPE / KATZ PICTURES

VOTE FOR JOBS, PEACE AND FREEDOM.
ANC
ANC

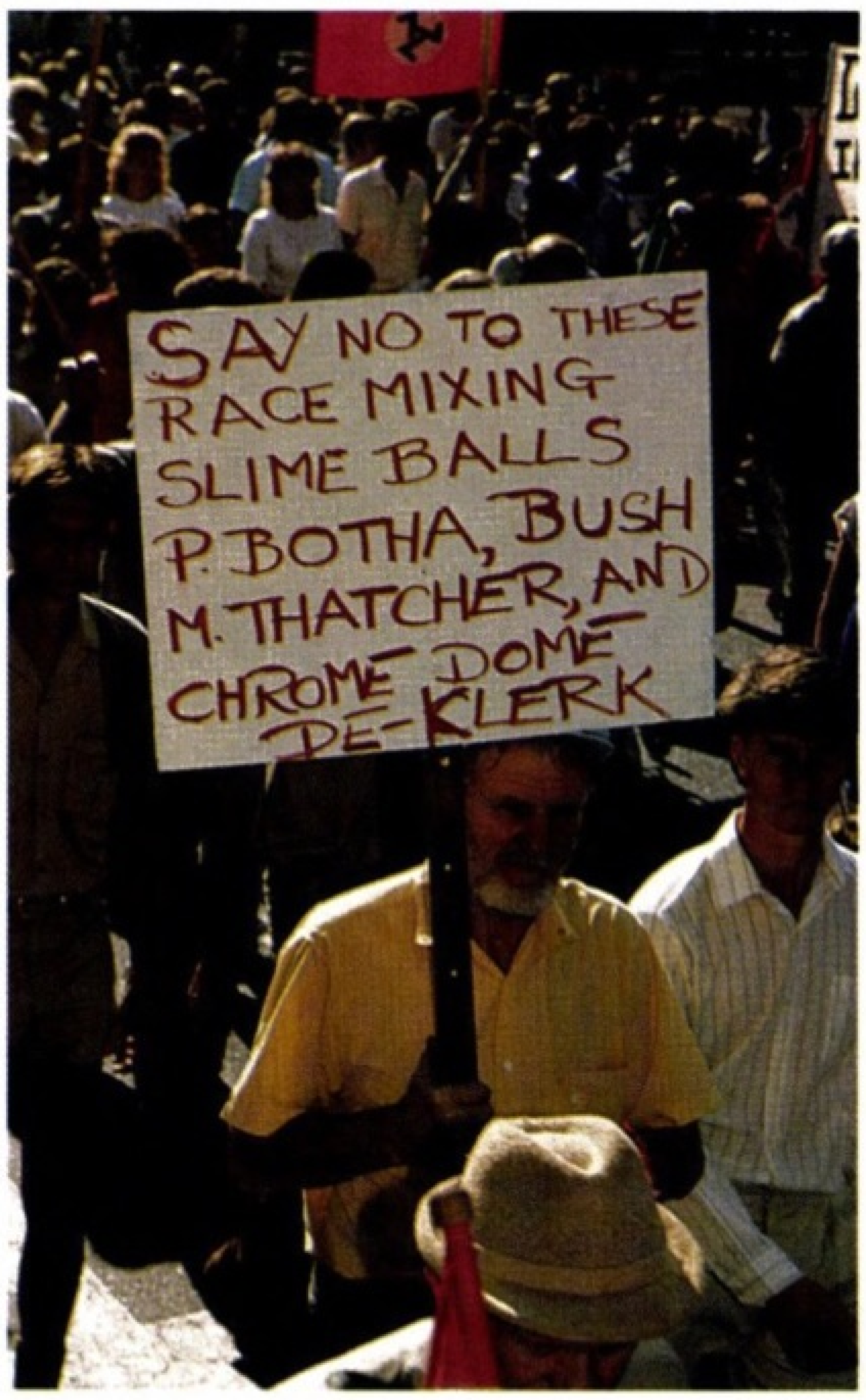
TOM STODDART / KATZ PICTURES

Two faces of democracy: looking towards equality with the ANC (above), fearing the loss of unfair power (below).

discussion with a difference. The group leader got each participant to wear the hat of another political party. Rather sneakily Mark Malan got to wear the hat of the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (Apla), the armed wing of the PAC.

'We in Apla believe that white men must be driven into the sea,' he said to the great mirth of the group. The irony was not lost on Seroke who doubled up laughing. Seroke and Malan were inseparable for the rest of the weekend.

'The SADF and Apla guys have struck a good relationship,' says Brown. The relationships live on. Brown says that: 'After last year's youth *indaba* [a Zulu word for 'meeting'] people are still getting together for drinks. They circulated addresses and set up meetings.'


SAY NO TO THESE RACE MIXING SLIME BALLS P. BOTHA, BUSH M. THATCHER, AND CHROME DOME DE-KLERK

G.MENDEL / MAGNUM

The value of these sessions goes much deeper. The armies of the ANC, PAC and the formerly almost all-white SADF are being merged. Most of South Africa's major political parties now must work together in the Government of national unity. For those who were lucky enough to be part of the *indaba* the unity process is less painful than for those who are meeting for the first time. 'Because we were able to break through their political differences, we were able to break through racial differences,' says Brown.

The new South African Government realizes that racism is going to rear its head in the fledgling administration. It's an almost inevitable hangover from years of apartheid, both physical and mental. The South African civil service is more than 90 per cent white and the new Government is planning an accelerated affirmative action programme to make it more representative. Affirmative action will breed more fear and tension and already Idasa has been contracted to the army, the police service and the local government ministry to hold workshops to deal with racism.

But these must go further, says Brown. Trust must also be established between the organs of government and the communities they serve. 'For example, we need to break down the perception that the police are an alien force.'

One of the ways to achieve this has been to establish community police forums around the country. Another has been to send senior police officers on university-run citizenship education programmes which address questions of race, attitudes and prejudice.

Another project, the Civic Dialogue Programme in Cape Town, is getting ordinary people talking to each other. 'We saw the need to facilitate interaction on the ground because people were alienated from national political negotiations,' says co-ordinator Michelle Booth. But national negotiations have a ripple effect on local government structures. Racially segregated town councils will have to integrate. There is great resistance to integration from white ratepayers' organizations. They fear that they will have to bear the brunt of sorely needed development projects in black areas.

A few months ago the programme brought together neighbouring communities from Cape Town's plush white enclaves, squatter camps and working-class suburbs. For many whites it was the first time that they had set foot in a black area. People found that, in the absence of political point scoring, they had more in common than they first thought. There was an almost uniform distrust of local government structures and the common thread through all the discussions was 'How are they spending our money?'

Booth says the workshops are 'more beneficial for whites. People from (mostly black) civic associations know what it's like in the white world.' But the Dialogue Programmes are necessary exercises in race relations. 'It's a real challenge for whites not to be patronizing,' comments Booth, adding 'by building relationships between people, you build common understanding.'

One participant wrote on her evaluation form: 'Attitudes and views must change in order to make the New South Africa work. It can't only come from one side – it's got to come from both sides. Otherwise it's not going to work.'

Led by South Africa's strong non-governmental organizations, the battle against racism in South Africa is in its infant stages. It's heartening that the first volleys are being fired. What is even more heartening is that the fight has the support of ordinary people, who are all trying to do their bit to make one world of so many... Even if it means taking a tour in Jimmy's taxi.

We still have such a long way to go. And perhaps I am an idealist to think that the battle will only have been won when – to paraphrase Bob Marley – the colour of a person's skin is of no more significance than the colour of their eyes. ■

Ferial Haffajee is a South African radio broadcaster and freelance writer based in Johannesburg.

Turning the tide

Aboriginal – or Adivasi – people face deep and universal prejudice. 'Backward', 'uncivilized', 'savage' are the words most commonly used to describe them. But Adivasi groups in South India are now fighting back.

***Mari Marcel Thekaekara** reports.*

STAN THEKAEKARA / ACCORD

MARCH 1984: Our first trip to the Nilgiri hills. Stan and I stood in a crowded lurching bus. A Paniya woman sat in a seat for three. The two places next to her were empty. Puzzled, I sat next to her. Immediately another woman occupied the third place next to me. 'Cheek of these people,' she muttered. 'They dare to sit when we are standing. What will they do next, I wonder?' I realized that she had stood braving the hairpin bends on a mountain road rather than sit next to the Paniya woman. It was my first experience of racism against aboriginal or Adivasi people in the Nilgiris.

June 1994: Stan and I were talking about our work in the Nilgiris at a meeting held in a Birmingham college. On our way to lunch an elderly British woman remarked to Stan, 'God wasn't very kind to these aboriginal people when He handed out looks was He?'

I was appalled. Yet, on reflection I realized that hers was possibly a view held by my grandmother, my mother and the majority of people in my own country. This woman didn't know much about political correctness but she probably wasn't really racist either and might go out of her way to give money to aboriginal causes. She was

STAN THEKAEKARA / ACCORD

Not losing their marbles in a Bettakurumba village. But tribal lifestyles are ridiculed in mainstream India (above).
Us and them: Paniya girls huddle together in the non-tribal world (previous page).

just insular in a way that the majority of people who never move out of the narrow confines of local communities are.

I'm also fairly certain that the aboriginal people she felt so sorry for would return the compliment with interest. When a group of Adivasi women encountered their first white person they were equally appalled. 'Is she ill? Why has she never been let out of her house to sit in the sun?' were the questions they asked. And if a young Adivasi man or woman were handed Madonna or Robert Redford on a platter they'd probably say a polite 'no thank you' – unless they've got hooked up to cable TV since I wrote this.

Challenging progress

But whether it comes through ignorance, a patronizing attitude or blatant racism, aboriginal peoples have faced discrimination from time immemorial. This is probably because their outlook on life is a rejection of what the rest of the world perceives as progress. Historically 'progress and civilization' have always been equated with material wealth and its accumulation.

The great civilizations of the world – even going back thousands of years to the Egyptian, Chinese, Indus Valley, Greek or Roman cultures – were founded on the presumption that progress means economic power and strength at any cost. They were built upon the exploitation of subjugated human beings, either through direct slavery and bondage, or inequitable taxation. The exceptions are very few. Slaves and feudal serfs were considered an acceptable part of civilized society and equality was a bizarre concept.

Aboriginal people generally limited their acquisitions in proportion to their needs. They collected and hunted only enough for the day. Surplus food was dried and stored for leaner times or shared immediately. When they practised agriculture they grew about enough grain for their needs.

Equality and the absence of caste or class is a hallmark of aboriginal societies. Obviously this is a philosophy that has always been the antithesis of what the rest of the world was trying to achieve and so the rest of the world dealt with it by deriding, belittling and sometimes massacring aboriginal groups. Centuries ago, in ancient manuscripts by the Hindu lawgiver Manu, Adivasis in India were described as savage, fierce, black races who inhabited the forests. These uncivilized people actually treated women as equals! It was permissible to hunt, capture and enslave them as they were considered only a little above wild beasts. These are probably the earliest written records of racism. Everywhere, Adivasis retreated to escape the onslaught of marauding armies and invaders and hid themselves deep within inaccessible jungles or high up in remote mountain areas.

Exotic, erotic and ridiculous

Over the centuries attitudes haven't changed all that much. A few years ago I was invited to my old school in Calcutta to talk to students about our work with tribal people. I asked the girls what the word 'Adivasi' meant to them. Back came the response: 'Wild, uncivilized, black, ignorant, illiterate, backward, uncouth. They dance a lot, they wear no clothes.' These were kids from a progressive school which encouraged social awareness and responsibility.

They reacted in this manner because of the appalling way Adivasis are portrayed by the media. There are very few films or news reports which deal with tribal issues with any degree of sympathy or sensitivity. Mostly the stories are sensationalized accounts of exotic people who dance, sing and have strange sexual norms. Meanwhile, the thrust of development has been to bring marginalized people into the mainstream. But this is based on inherently racist presumptions – that the majority or dominant culture is superior, and that it is desirable for everyone else to fit into the majority mould. It leaves little room for ethnicity or

...if a young Adivasi man or woman were handed Madonna or Robert Redford on a platter they'd probably say a polite 'no thank you'.

individualism. It is an acceptance of the melting-pot principle. In the Nilgiris, as in the rest of India, a school-going tribal child is confronted with a non-tribal teacher who despises tribal culture. The teacher dismisses the child's tribal name as ridiculous and changes it to a conventional Hindu Tamil one. The books the child looks at are foreign. In one an urban middle-class mother dressed in an alien sari cooks an unfamiliar breakfast and sends her son away to school. The 'good boy', called Ram, brushes his teeth with toothpaste (a tribal child would use *neem* twigs or charcoal) and his father goes to the office. The tribal child's father would work in the forest or a field. Ram is everything that the tribal boy is not. When a girl enters school she is taught that in order to look 'civilized' she must dress like her non-tribal teacher. Her mother's tribal clothes are ridiculed as backward, primitive and even indecent. And so begins a process of de-tribalization.

This process is reinforced by government officials, social workers and missionaries. Pushed by people in power, it begins to be believed and internalized.

SEAN SPRAGUE / PANOS PICTURES

Domestic economy: Food, clothes, shelter – and live music.

Chorian's stand

When governments entered tribal lands they subjugated them. This was done in India, Australia, the US and everywhere in the world where aboriginal people were forced to accept the sovereignty of an aggressive, authoritarian regime. Their laws, systems and culture were totally overruled. They were catapulted into an alien world which placed them at a tremendous disadvantage and which forced them to deal with a legal, administrative and political system they did not understand. When they fumbled they were ridiculed and stereotyped as ignorant and inferior. And this left them vulnerable to exploitation by vested interests – both political and economic.

Hands-on help? A local government official visits a tribal village following a petition.

STAN THEKAEKARA / ACCORD

But it is not just a question of economic exploitation. Tribals face racial discrimination and economic exploitation because of their culture and ethos. Their culture does not prepare them for the aggressive, acquisitive world which moves in, exploits and demolishes their environment. It does not equip them to fight back.

In the development game are well-meaning social workers who want to help but are ultimately patronizing. They would be horrified at the suggestion that they are being racist, albeit unintentionally. But what is it, if not racist, to blunder in with the intention of 'uplifting', 'improving' and 'civilizing'? I've come across missionaries, – both Christian and Hindu – Gandhians and activists who've felt that for tribals to progress they must leave behind their 'quaint' ethnic customs.

When we began ACCORD (Action for Community Organization, Rehabilitation and Development) in 1986, we realized that mainstream India had entered the Adivasi world with a vengeance and that the people had to equip themselves with new skills in order to survive and regain some measure of dignity and pride. They needed to realize their own strength and potential.

In 1987, for the first time, the tide began to turn. Chorian, a Paniya tribal, was humiliated by a landlord who ran a tractor through Chorian's land, destroying precious coffee bushes and pepper vines. For years the feudal landlords of the area had trampled upon tribal rights. But this time 200 tribals rallied together within hours. The police arrived and ACCORD's lawyer filed a suit on Chorian's behalf for damages. Word spread like wildfire. A tribal had actually resisted a powerful landlord. And, more importantly, tribals were banding together to resist exploitation and abuse.

In the seven years since that incident the tribals of Gudalur have come a long way. They no longer accept exploitation as their grandparents did. A strong Adivasi organization, the AMS (Adivasi Munnetra Sangam), has been formed to fight for tribal rights.

We all have a long way to go yet. There has to be a sustained effort to stop the onslaught which constantly tells Adivasis that they are inferior, backward and ignorant. And we have to drive home the message to Adivasi kids that their culture is something to be proud of and to convey the same message to the perpetrators of racism. Because unless both sides are convinced of this the fight will be a futile one. ■

Mari Marcel Thekaekara has for the past nine years worked with *ACCORD*, the organization she and her husband Stan set up with local Adivasis in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

IN YOUR FACE

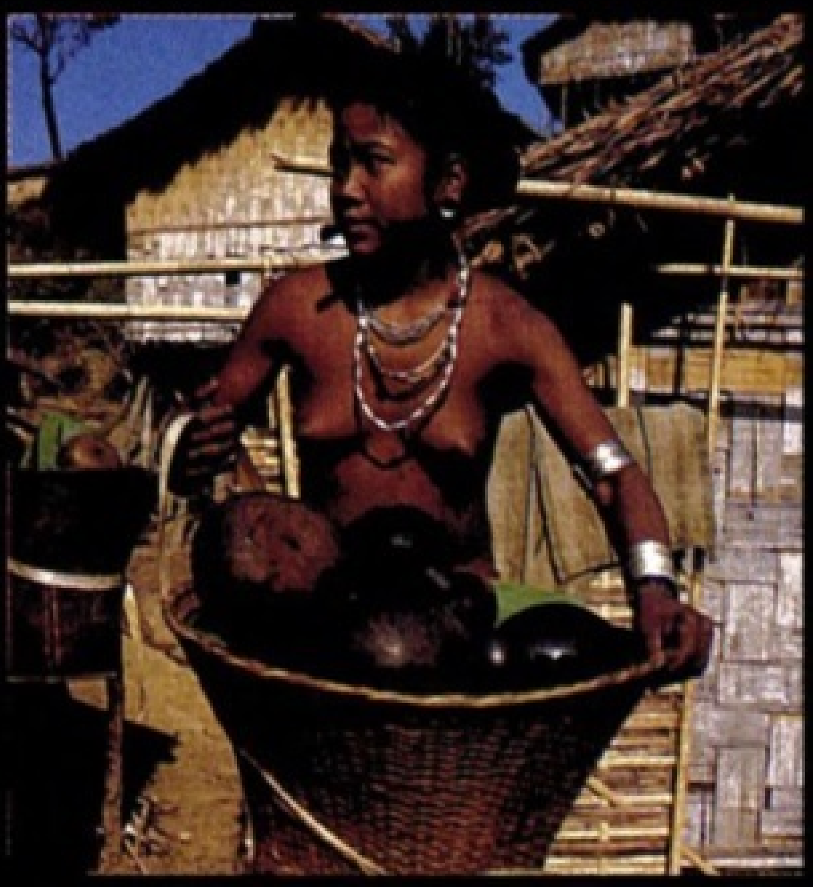
RACISM IS OFTEN PERPETRATED AND MAINTAINED BY INSTITUTIONS THAT ARE AN ACCEPTED PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE – SUCH AS GOVERNMENTS, POLICE FORCES OR RELIGIONS

THE GOVERNMENT

The Jumma tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh have been under attack for years. The Government is moving settlers into their hills and using the army to exterminate the local people altogether. What follows is the harrowing testimony of a refugee from the area. His identity cannot be revealed as he fears what is left of his family could be harmed as a result.

THEY rounded up everyone – including all the men working for us for the harvest – except my mother and me. They shot my uncle through the chest. He screamed out for his mother as he died. Then they lined us all up against the well. There was my father, uncle, grandmother, mother and me. Then they shot my father. They shot him through the neck. I was pushed into a bush. I was there in a bush with my aunt and her new-born baby. I can just remember how she held her hand over the baby's mouth to stop it crying because of the mosquitoes in the bush. Then they wanted to kill my other uncle. The women lay on top of him to try and save him. They butted him with their rifles. He did survive. Then they raped my cousin who was 16.

I will never forget these things. I was only a little boy, but they will always be with me. I didn't cry when they killed my father. I thought: 'If I cry he won't come alive again'.



We had to flee. We ran silently and terrified into the woods. We had to stay in the woods for weeks. We had no food so we dug for roots. Some people were so weak they fell into holes and never got out again, they were so emotionally drained. They gave all the food they had to the children. We were trained not to speak. We used a pinch as a warning sign if we heard someone coming. We had leeches all over us, we were barefoot, bleeding. I just remember running and running all the time. The killers were still about. Sometimes they didn't use guns to kill people as the noise would warn the next village. So they would lie their victims down in a row and cut off their heads. Their knives became blunt. Someone I know was saved by a blunt blade.

The Government is famous for its stance on the Jumma people – 'We want the land, not the people'. They are giving people the choice of conversion to Islam, exile or death. Some of my primary teachers did convert – on the surface, but they stayed Buddhist inside. They also wanted all tribal women to bear only Bengali children. They would load up trucks with women and take them to military camps until they became pregnant by the soldiers. We used to listen to the BBC Bengali service although this regrettably broadcast a lot of rubbish in favour of the Bengali Government. All local news was compiled by the army. I cannot tell you how many people were killed during this time, the late 1970s and up to now. Most bodies were never returned to their relatives.

Source: Survival International, UK.

PHOTOS: MARK McEVOY / PANOS PICTURES, DAVID HOFFMAN, P JONES GRIFFITHS / MAGNUM

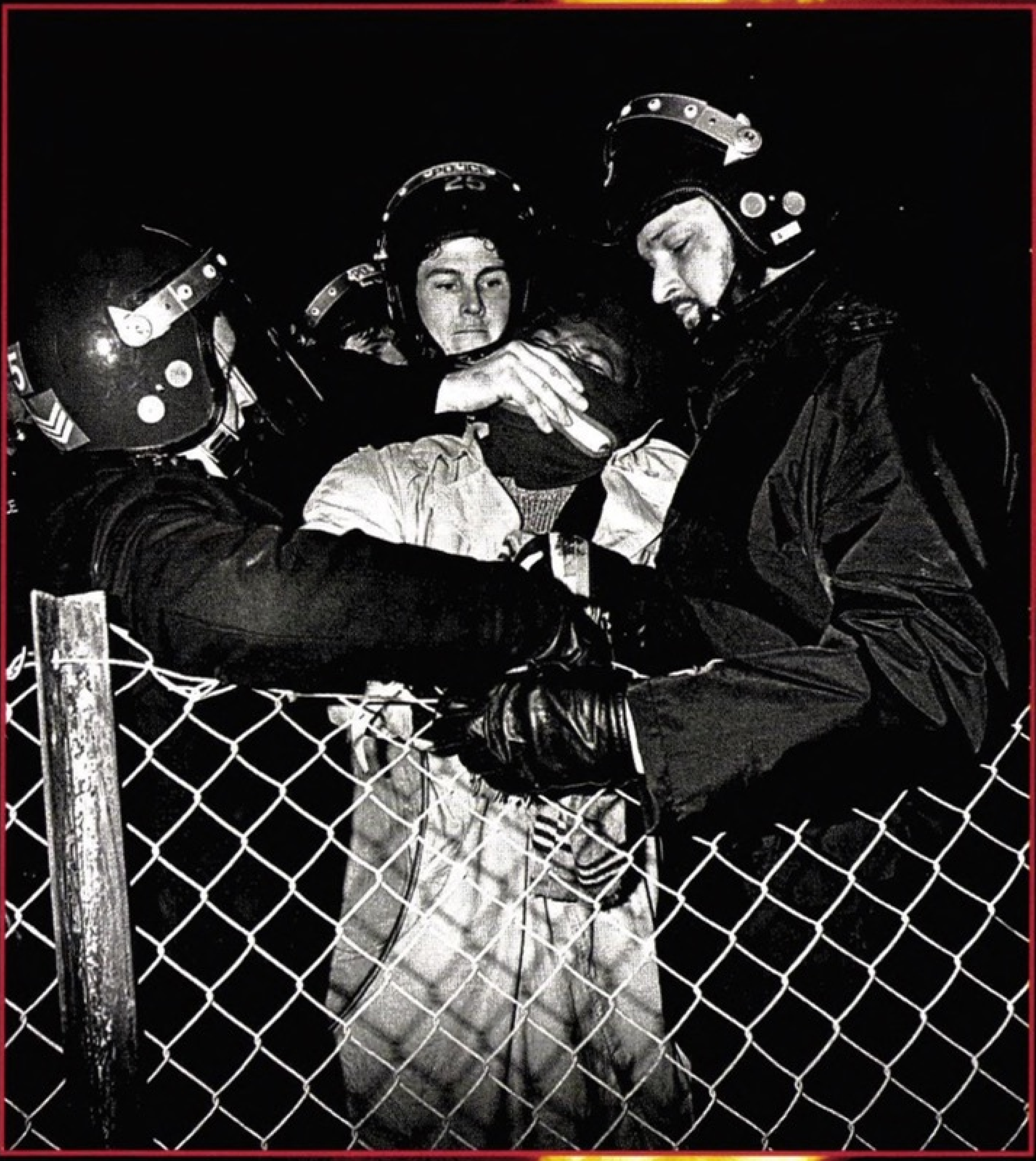
THE LAW

On 14 January 1991 Malkjit Singh Natt was arrested at his workplace, a factory in east London. Travelling to Plaistow police station in a police car Mr Natt recognized two male officers who had previously arrested and assaulted him on a number of occasions. Fearing a repeat performance he turned on a tape recorder which he had been carrying in his pocket.

Mr Natt: Why am I being arrested?
Police Constable: Yer just a pain in the arse, ain't yer?
Mr Natt: Oh God.
PC: Why don't you go and set fire to yourself, or something?
Mr Natt: You carry on arresting me – you carry on arresting me with no reason. Why carry on? I don't know why.
PC: Eh?
Mr Natt: Why? Why do you [unintelligible] to me like that?
PC: 'Cos you're a shit.
Mr Natt: Eh?
PC: Behave yourself.
Mr Natt: Last time you arrest me without any reason. You try and arrest me again and again – why?
PC: It often happens in your country don't it?
Mr Natt: Eh?
PC: It happens at home where your lot come from.
Mr Natt: Yes – what happens over there it would never happen like that.
PC: Yes it does. Worse than that.
Mr Natt: What?
PC: They'd go out and shoot yer, or something.
Mr Natt: What?
PC: That's what we should do – fucking shoot yer.
Mr Natt: You shoot me?
PC: Yes I would.
Mr Natt: What for?
PC: Well... wanker.
Mr Natt: What? That's no good for police officer doing that thing, you know. You know that? Eh?
PC: Why don't you go home?
Mr Natt: What's go home?
PC: Go home – you know – to India or Pakistan, or wherever you fucking come from.

The verbal abuse continued during the seven minute journey and the sound of Mr Natt being assaulted was recorded on the tape. But it was Mr Natt who was convicted for assault, despite the evidence of the tape. An internal police enquiry 'disciplined' the officers by cutting their pay for a day.

Source: Racism: the destruction of civil and political liberties *by the Anti-Racist Alliance and Liberty (NCCL), UK.*



THE CHURCH

Floyd Cochran was the fifth-ranking member of Church of Jesus Christ Christian Aryan Nations – a white supremacist group in the US combining Nazi thinking with a racist form of biblical fundamentalism. He is now an ardent anti-racist. The turning point for him was when a fellow member called his son a 'genetic defect' who'd 'have to be euthanized'.

WE used to send people into the cities to pick up homeless kids and bring them back to the compound. You give a homeless kid some food and a place to stay and tell him that you love him - you can do a lot of things with that kid.

The number one thing is that nobody gets blamed for anything. My marriage didn't work? It's not my fault, it's because I was a racial activist and my wife couldn't stand it. I didn't graduate from high school? It's because my Jewish English teacher didn't like me. If you couldn't find a job - hey it's not your fault, it's the Jews'. Or it's because of affirmative action... even though northern Idaho is 98 percent white!

One night I was doing guard duty. It was one o'clock, and a taxicab pulls up to the gate. A man gets out and says he wants to see Pastor Butler. I say: 'Hold on! We need to see some identification'. He unbuttons his shirt and pulls out his stomach and on it is tattooed 'ARYAN WARRIOR'.

I tell him to stand there, and I call up to Frank, the sergeant. Frank comes running down carrying a shotgun. So I've got this cab driver sitting there, it's midnight, and this guy with his gut hanging out and Frank with a shotgun and a pair of underpants on. And I'm thinking to myself: 'I'm saving the white race?'

When Cochran left Aryan Nations a local sheriff linked him up with the Center for Democratic Renewal, an Atlanta-based organization that monitors the hard Right.

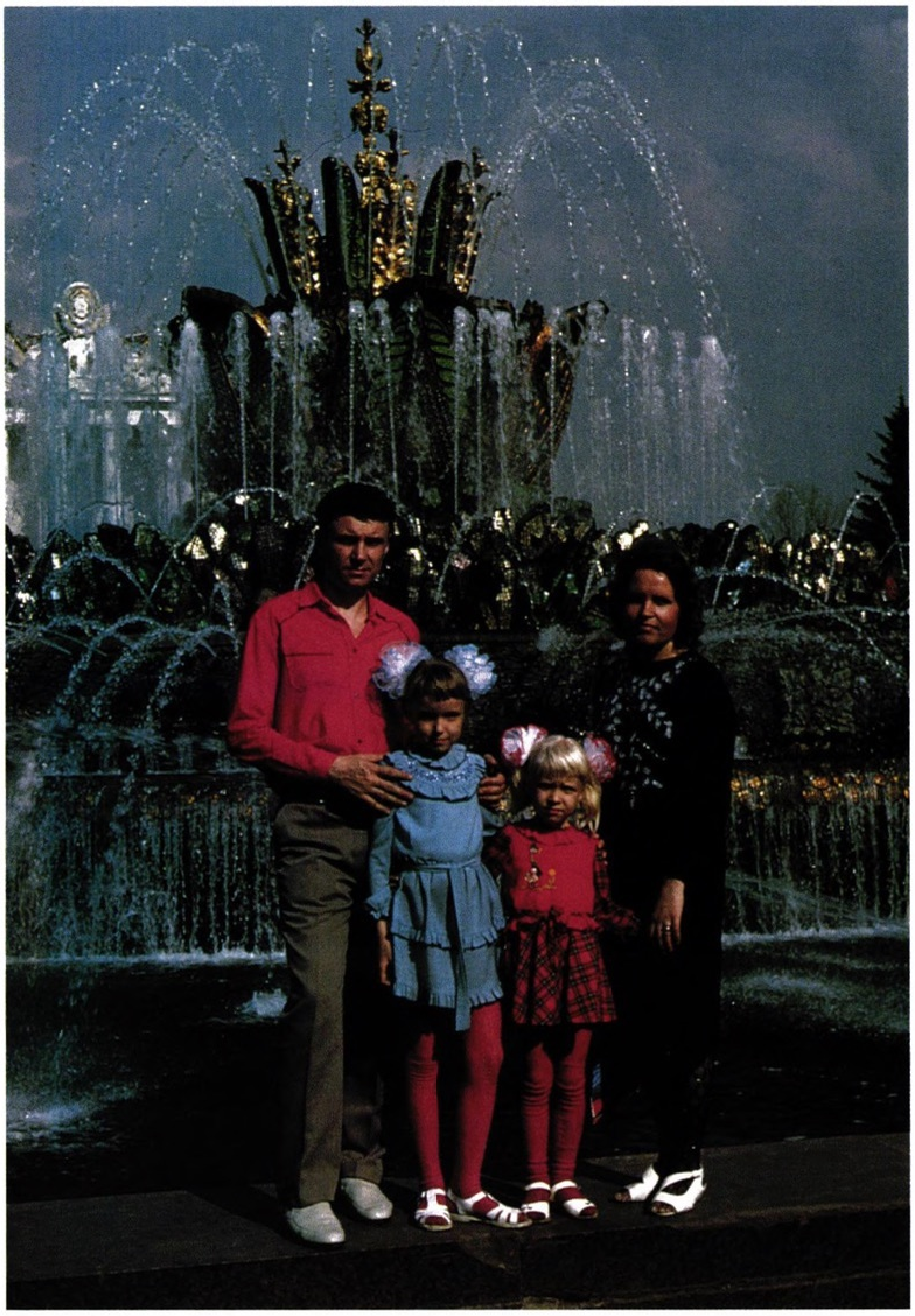
Leonard Zeskind was the first person to contact me from there. Leonard is Jewish. I mean, here's a person who a month earlier I was advocating killing. And he's the first person to call me up. And not to ask for anything, other than, 'Do you want someone to talk to?'

In the racist movement one of the things I would teach people was that white people had positive electrons. But the Jewish people, the children of Satan, had negative electrons. And if you walked into a room with them, those electrons would go off. The first time I was around Leonard, I kept walking around both sides of him. I didn't say a word. Finally Leonard said, 'I shut 'em off!'

Source: Mother Jones *(Foundation for National Progress, Copyright 1994), US.*

Are you a pure Aryan?

Their economy shattered and national pride in tatters, many ordinary Russians are seeking comfort in racist scapegoating. ***Olivia Ward*** *reports from Moscow.*



H GRUYAERT / MAGNUM

The future is blond. The mayors of Moscow and St. Petersburg have re-imposed a ban on 'foreigners' living in their cities.

ON the stage of the packed Moscow concert hall, angel-faced girls in white dresses sang mournful songs of a great Russian past. In the lobby at intermission the audience was also deep in nostalgia. A bookshelf spread with some of the racist bibles of the twentieth century – *Protocols of the Elders of Zion, The World Jewish Conspiracy, White Power,* and Adolf Hitler's durable *Mein Kampf.*

'Can you give me a discount if I take both of these?' a blonde matron in a denim jacket wheedled, as though bargaining over potatoes. Next to her a neatly dressed young man chatted with clerks, idly turning the pages of an anti-Western communist tract.

These, to all appearances, were ordinary Russians. Some dressed in evening finery for the concert, others in business suits or nondescript day clothes. No one sported the black leathers or combat fatigues that are the radical chic of the Russian racist community.

'I'm always close to tears when I hear beautiful music,' apologized Alexei Matyukhin, a stocky fortyish man with thick glasses. 'Our Russian culture has been trampled on. We're so humiliated these days. All we can do is hope that something will survive.'

Three years ago Matyukhin celebrated what he thought would be the time of his political life – Russia's debut as an independent democratic state. 'I was at the White House with Yeltsin during the coup,' Matyukhin said. 'Now I'm another highly qualified, unemployed specialist. The country has been cheated and so have I.'

Like many people, Matyukhin rejects out-and-out racism as 'non-Russian.' But he believes that the West is destroying the country's values; that the streets are overrun with criminals from the Caucasus, nicknamed 'blacks'. As for Jews, they might be involved in 'unsavoury dealings' – or secretly influencing the fate of the country.

Fallen monarchs

'For years we were miserable, but we knew we were a superpower,' says bank clerk Ivan Novikov. 'Now we turn on the TV and see Americans and Europeans talking about us as though we're charity cases. We don't have a place in the world any more.' With head-spinning speed, Russians who lived as monarchs of the well-defended Soviet castle have seen their leaders knocking on Western doors for trade deals, loans and military agreements, and waiting in line as ordinary supplicants.

Those like Matyukhin who have neither money nor pride in their country's status look around at non-Russians with increasing suspicion. Writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn – revered as Russia's cultural icon and spiritual guru – rails against the 'obscenity' of new Western influences. Meanwhile some Russian Orthodox churchmen openly attack other religions and believe they should be banned. And there is a rift in the church between its liberal wing and those who would make anti-Semitism and xenophobia an article of faith.

President Boris Yeltsin has waged intermittent war on racism and enshrined human rights in the constitution. But the roots of democracy run shallow. Although racism is officially taboo and loudmouthed extremists are sometimes prosecuted, the level of tolerance for it is high.

Few minorities escape hostile attention. Resentment against Chinese and Vietnamese is on the rise as Asian traders enter the Russian market. Africans, wooed from socialist countries with Soviet educational grants, are suspect and urged to leave; when South Africa became a non-racial democracy many Russians sympathized with the pro-apartheid movement. Westerners, once greeted with interest during the waning Soviet days, are now held responsible for the decay of Russian values, widespread poverty and even the declining health of the population.

But Jews, who have always been viewed as outsiders by Russians, bear the brunt of the strident nationalists' resentment. The exodus of Jews to wealthier countries before the collapse of communism was seen as betrayal, even by those who were happy to see them go. The return of Russian Jews as business people earns them particular antipathy.

'Are you a pure Aryan?' asked a slight man with nicotine-stained teeth, as Moscow browsers looked curiously at his anti-Semitic newsletter. 'If not I can't sell you any of my publications.'

So entrenched is anti-Semitism among nationalists that former Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi was undermined as a suitable candidate for the 1996 election campaign on the grounds that his mother was rumoured to be Jewish.

It is paradoxical that many nationalists, including Vladimir Zhirinovsky, are angry enough to go to court over public accusations of anti-Semitism. But among their supporters they have few reservations about mingling with the most hair-raising racist propagandists.

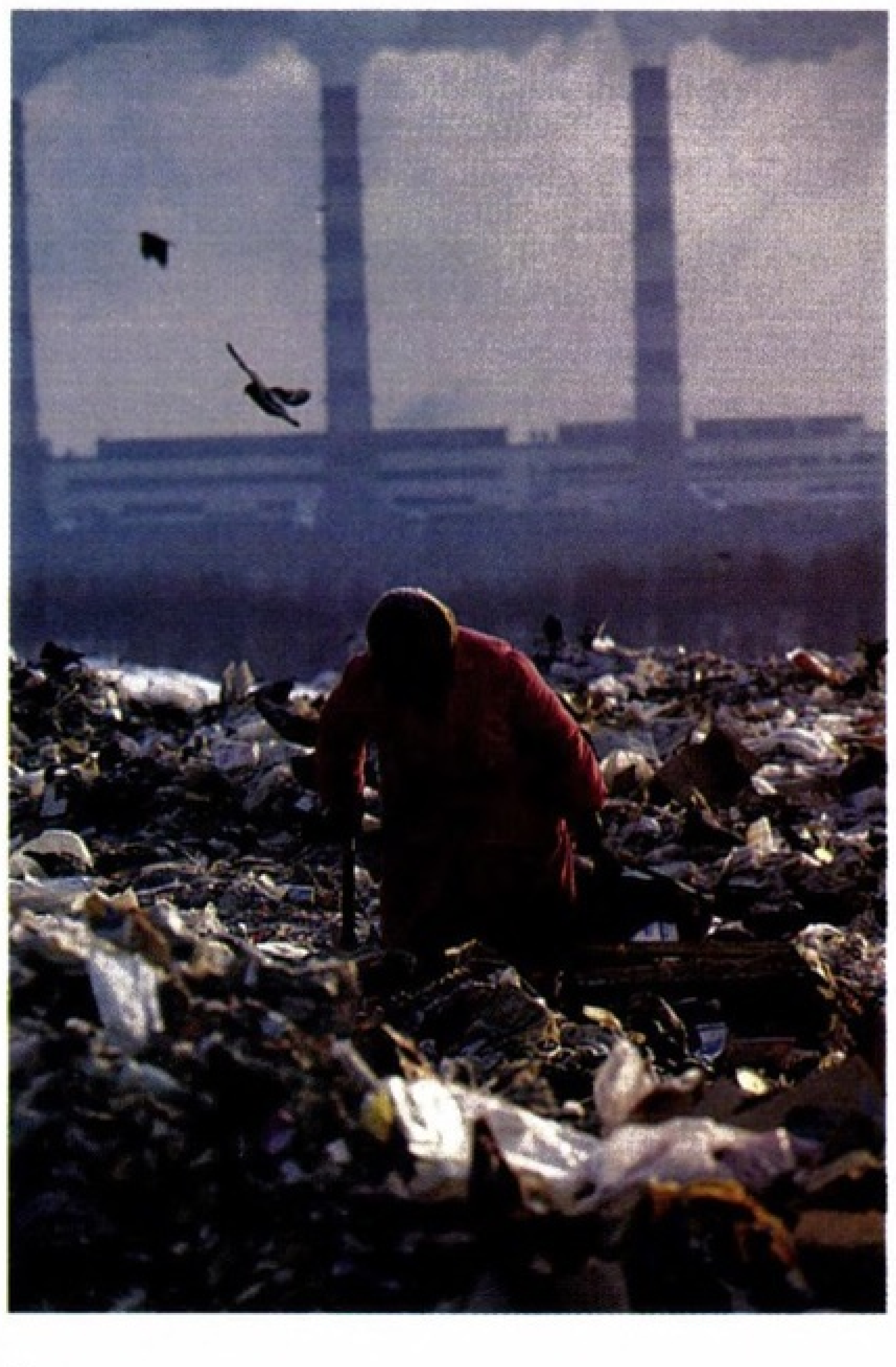
Official racism is at a new high. The mayors of Moscow, St Petersburg and other cities have brought back an old Soviet ban on 'foreigners' living in their cities, and police often beat up Caucasians and other non-Russians accused of crimes. More than 400 Africans were deported from Russia after they tested positive for the HIV virus, and the State Duma is drafting a new law to force non-Russians to take AIDS tests. Refugees are increasingly unwelcome and some have been pressured to sign agreements to move to the most barren and polluted parts of the country.

Racism in the rubble

The climate of racial intolerance isn't surprising or even new in a country that used to call all foreigners *nemtsy* or mutes. Throughout the centuries non-Russians were stared at, envied, ridiculed and isolated in ghettos as though infected with dangerous diseases.

'Cultural' explanations abound. 'You must understand that we're very insecure these days', says 20-year-old Katerina Kuminova, a student at Moscow University. 'Russian culture flourished for millennia but we were always up against people who wanted to destroy it. After 70 years of being locked behind the Iron Curtain we weren't prepared for all these powerful new influences. We're trying to rediscover our cultural identity and we don't know how to cope.'

'The country has been cheated and so have I.'



Down in the dumps: not Manila or Bombay but Moscow.

PETER ANDREWS / KATZ PICTURES

But Russia's drawn-out economic crisis provides one answer. As the floorboards fell out of the economy, scattering old certainties along with the hopes and dreams of average Russians, racism was thick in the rubble.

'Comfortable people don't go around looking for somebody to hate,' says Tancred Golenpolsky of Moscow's *Jewish Gazette*. 'Whenever people are hungry or miserable or insecure they blame it on a scapegoat.'

In the December election Zhirinovsky won most of the party votes in the lower house of Parliament with promises of a new Orthodox Slavic paradise. Denying that he is a racist, he rails at 'foreign influences' and calls for 'pure Russians' to unite against imported filth. Contrary to the hopes of liberals, Russia's first independent parliamentary election moved ultra-nationalism into the mainstream. Some blame government apathy for the popularity of extremism.

But others say that a racist backlash was bound to happen, and marvel that it hasn't been more violent. They point out that Lenin's plan for a Soviet Union of free and equal minorities was a fairytale at best and a nightmare at worst.

After the USSR was formed in 1924, Stalin played a deadly game with hundreds of ethnic groups as pawns. Purges and pogroms massacred millions as people were shifted from one end of the vast empire to another. Homes and possessions were stripped from one group and given to another. Enclaves of minorities were locked into territories of their enemies. Where no hatred existed, the secret police fomented it. By the 1980s the Soviet Union was a highly centralized federation dominated by Russians and dependent on them.

Now, with only the rags of its old superpower mantle wrapped around it, Russia is in culture shock. Some see the 'McDonaldization' of culture as part of a 'Zionist Conspiracy' to undermine Russia, in spite of the fact that only 1.5 million Jews remain in the country. Muslims are similarly mistrusted. Some Azerbaijanis, Tajiks, Chechens and other Muslim people of the Caucasus are linked with the *mafiya*. When Ruslan Khasbulatov attempted to seize power last year, he was caricatured in some liberal publications as a turbaned ayatollah. Since the war in Bosnia, anti-Muslim feelings have run even higher and nationalists call for armed support for the Serbs.

But nationalism isn't just a Russian disease. Last year more than 600,000 Russians and others fled the newly independent republics of Central Asia because of discrimination, humiliation and sometimes violence. The Government expects an influx of three million people by the end of this year.

Landing in the middle of an economic crisis, at a time when many Russians are squeezed into substandard flats, the newcomers are often unwelcome – especially if their skins are dark.

'Nobody was prepared for the break-up of the Soviet Union,' says chess champion Anatoly Karpov, who heads the Federation of Peace and Conciliation, an organization that aids displaced people. 'You have situations where a Turkman was born in Ukraine and married to a Ukrainian, and is now working in Moldova. In Russia today there are many people who don't know what their identity or nationality is.'

And there are others who will use their own Russian identity to scapegoat them. ■

Olivia Ward is the Moscow bureau chief of the *Toronto Star*.

The scars of race are deep and divisive. They can be seen in all parts of the world, in all walks of life.

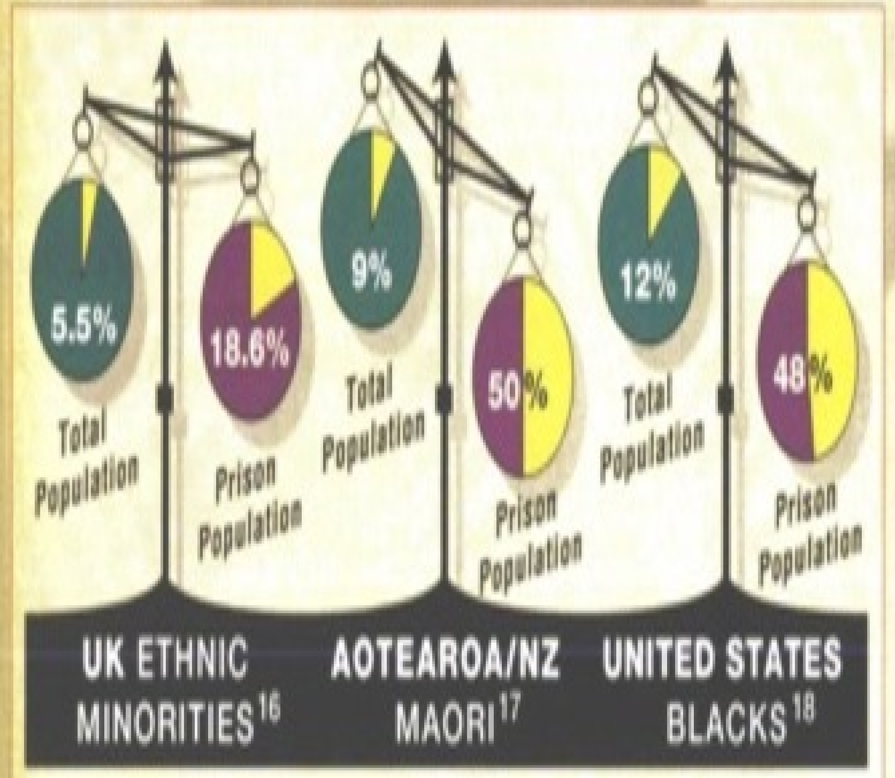
VIOLENCE

Racist attacks are on the increase in many parts of the world.

- Indigenous Canadians are six times more likely to be murdered than other Canadians.[1]
- In the UK Asians are 50 times and West Indians 36 times more likely than whites to be victims of racial violence.[14]
- In the US 6 out of every 10 hate crimes had a racial motivation and a further 1 in 10 an ethnic motivation. 36% were anti-black, 21% anti-white and 13% anti-Jewish.[15]

IMPRISONMENT & EXILE

Belonging to the 'wrong' group increases the chances of imprisonment and asylum rejection.



- Most of the world's 15 million refugees come from the South and seek refuge in neighbouring countries. One person in 10 was a refugee in Malawi in July 1993, compared to one in 5,000 in the UK. The rate of asylum refusal on appeal in the UK has risen from 14% to 72%.[19]

WORK

Racial prejudice affects access to jobs.

CANADA – indigenous people are twice as likely to be jobless as the rest of the population.

US – blacks are twice as likely to be jobless as whites.[1]

UK – ethnic minorities are twice as likely to be jobless. Ethnic minority women are three times as likely to be jobless as other women.[2]

AUSTRALIA – Aboriginal people are more than three times as likely to be jobless as the general population.[3]

- But in **INDIA** 10% of higher level jobs in the public sector now go to people from the Scheduled Castes (more than 16% of the total population) compared with only 3.5% in 1972.[4]

HEALTH, WEALTH & HOUSING

How we live, where we live and how long we live may often be determined by race.

In the **US**

- Nearly 50% of the black population live in polluted areas, compared to 30% of the white population.[1]
- 40% of Native Americans live below the poverty line. 37% die before the age of 45.[10] They are 10 times as likely to die of alcohol abuse.[11]

In **AUSTRALIA**

- Aboriginal people's life expectancy is 15 years lower than the rest of the population. Infant mortality is three times higher.[3]
- The suicide rate is six times higher.[10]
- Aboriginal family income is about half the Australian average.[12]

In **SOUTH AFRICA**

- The white 14% of the population owns almost 90% of the land.
- Life expectancy for whites is 73 years, for blacks 57. Infant mortality among whites is 13 per 1,000; among blacks, 57 per 1,000.[9]

In the **UK**

- People from ethnic minorities are four times more likely to be homeless in London than whites.[13]

STRIFE & GENOCIDE

Half of the world's states have recently experienced inter-ethnic strife.

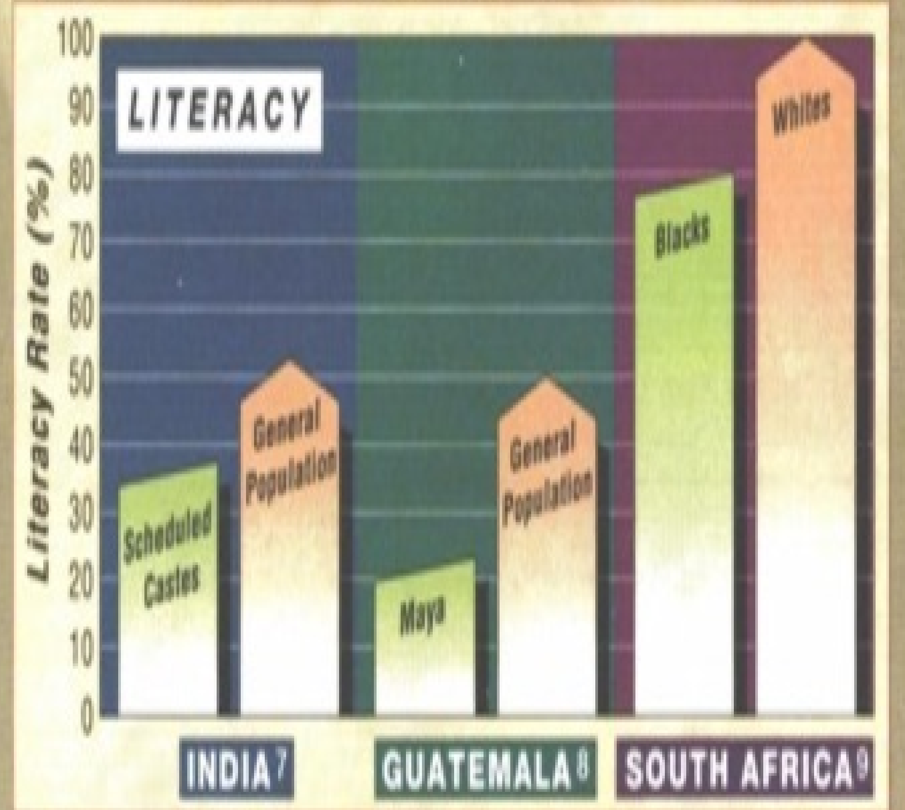
The result has been:

- In Afghanistan one in six people has been disabled by a landmine.
- In Zaire more than 800,000 people have been displaced.
- In Sri Lanka more than 14,000 have died in clashes between Tamils and the Sinhalese.
- In former Yugoslavia more than 130,000 people have been killed since 1991.[1]
- Up to 50,000 people were killed in Burundi in 1993.[20]
- In Rwanda the attempted genocide of Tutsis has resulted in an estimated 200,000 - 500,000 deaths.
- In Brazil an average of one tribe a year has been wiped out since 1900.[10]

EDUCATION

Discrimination affects the languages we speak and the education we get.

Fewer than 5% of the world's languages are given official recognition by governments.[5] No more than 100 people can speak Japan's indigenous Ainu language fluently.[6]



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1 UNDP *Human Development Report*, 1994. 2 1991 Census; Crown copyright. Through NEMDA. 3 NSW Task Force on Aboriginal Health, 1987. 4 *India Today*, 30 April, 1994. 5 Minority Rights Group. 6 *COLORS* 4, 1993. 7 Indian Census 1991. 8 Philip Wearne, *The Maya of Guatemala*, MRG, London, forthcoming. 9 *Choices*, UNDP, June 1994. 10 Survival International. 11 *Talking Stick* 1, 1993. 12 1986 Census, Australian Bureau of Statistics. 13 *Race through the 90's*, Council for Racial Equality and BBC, 1993. 14 Institute of Race Relations. 15 *Uniform Crime Report*, March 1994, FBI, reported by Center for Democratic Renewal 16 Home Office Statistical Bulletin 9/91. Through NEMDA. 17 Julian Berger, *The Gaia Atlas of First Peoples*, 1990. 18 Bureau of Justice Statistics, in *New Statesman & Society*, 1 April 1994. 19 *WUS Update*, June 1994. 20 *UNHCR Information Bulletin*, 10 December 1993.

PHOTOS: BABETTE MATHIS, DAVID HOFFMAN

ILLUSTRATION: LIZ PYLE

Welcome!

*There's no refuge in Fortress Africa. For whites fleeing from civil war in famine stricken Europe the door is firmly shut. A table-turning fable by **Urvi Patel**.*

5:00 AM, OCTOBER 16: *the long corridor. Soft plum carpeting stretching as far as the eye can see. The electronic walkway rolls alongside, with barely a purr.*

On the walls flash pictures of the host country. The plains so wide, lush and green that the combine harvesters moving across them form little abstract patterns. Then aerial views of Kinshasa – gleaming glass-fronted high-rises towering beside the river, a sprawl of parks, then tidy combs of suburbia, cottages in brilliant white with patches of lawn.

Next follows a melange of 'life' – a shot of Parliament in session; Kananga Cultural Centre, home of the State Opera; a family in their yacht grinning into the sun; office workers swarming hotly in their smart city gear; computer factories; the army-navy-airforce in appropriate action; and finally the Prime Minister mouthing sounds before a sea of proud citizens.

The screens go blank for a few seconds before pronouncing, WELCOME TO ZAIRE. *This message appears three times, as though the emphasis were necessary. Then the pictures start again.*

To the rush of exiting passengers from British United flight 209 the screens are an irrelevance. They nudge and hurry down the walkways, while only a sporty few negotiate the carpet with brisk strides.

Darting now behind one person, now behind another, is Jan Smith. She carries an old, well-scrubbed tote bag. She walks as straight as she can, avoiding the electronic gaze of the security cameras, trying to look as if she were out shopping. Her clothes are simple but neat and in her pocket is a passport with a Zairian visa. It has cost her all her life's savings.

Now the passengers are diverging. African Nationals Only are breezing past the customs inspectors who seem hardly to glance at their documents. She must join the other queue, which has squads of staff but barely moves.

She is looking at herself from a great distance. A scared middle-aged woman with a pale grin plastered on her face. Beneath her tan she is still white. Her darkened hair and tight curls are fake. She is unreal.

Meanwhile in Terminal 2 Luc Vermeer is being walked down a corridor by two security guards. His hands are tied behind his back. His mouth is behind the leather strap that muffles all sound.

An hour earlier he was told yet again that his second appeal had been rejected. This time they meant it. The only words he recognizes the guards saying are 'milkface' and 'spook'.

The lawyer provided for him by a refugee organization has new plans for a fresh appeal. But it is five in the morning and she is at home, asleep.

All the other passengers are already on board, when he is led on to the plane. He is being deported to the Netherlands. The Dutch authorities know he is coming. They have more than a few questions to ask him.

EIGHT MONTHS AGO

An extraordinary meeting of the Alliance of African Nations (ANA) is held in Kinshasa. The previous one was on tackling the recession. This meeting, it could be said, is more of the same. The 'refugee crisis' is a good way of getting people's minds off things.

The following decisions are arrived at: asylum seekers from Europe are not fleeing real persecution, though the warfare in Britain, the Netherlands, Italy and Franco-Germany is acknowledged. Their real reasons are economic. Visas are henceforth mandatory for all Europeans. Airlines are to be fined heavily for carrying any passengers without documents or with bogus documents. Police training is to be made available for airline staff to detect possible 'illegals'. Asylum seekers without proper documentation may be deported immediately.

Asylum seekers must register their request at the first port of call. The post-communist states of the Middle East are to be given a special trading status vis-à-vis the Alliance of African Nations if they agree to screen potential illegals.

Some asylum seekers may not have the right to appeal. All must be fingerprinted. Computer filing of data on applicants is to be left to the discretion of member states, but is highly desirable.

Before she steps into her limo at the end of the meeting the Zairian Prime Minister has these remarks for the Press: 'I think these measures were essential and indeed some members would argue they don't go far enough. If we go on as we are, by the end of the century we could have four million people from the European Union here. Now that is an awful lot and I think it means that people are really afraid that this country may be swamped by people whose culture is completely alien. Zaire has done so much for democracy, for law and for the world in general that if there is any fear that it may be swamped, people are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in.'

Currently, five percent of the population of Zaire is white. Most of these people are second or third generation Zairians and not recent migrants. The country's main newspapers carry reports under the following headlines: 'Human rights low on the agenda in Fortress Africa' (*Le Guardian*). 'The boat is full – send scrounging whites back' (*Le Soleil*).

SEVEN MONTHS AGO

White worker Kurt T loses his case for unfair dismissal due to racial discrimination. His employer Walu M claimed in his defence that the dismissal was due to the disruptive effect Kurt T had on other employees with whom he was not popular. 'Why is it wrong for me to refuse to have any of these people in my firm when the Government is refusing to have them come into the country?' the employer asks.

SIX MONTHS AGO

Miriam Mokoko is informed that her claim for citizenship cannot be granted. She is married to a Zairian and has completed residency requirements, but has a criminal record. Police files reveal that she has not paid a parking fine levied three years ago.

FIVE MONTHS AGO

The refugee centre in Djolu is firebombed by members of First Nation, a hard-core fascist group. Fifteen refugees, mainly from Franco-Germany, four of them children, die as a result. Police say the perpetrators of the attack are known to local people but no-one has divulged any details. There is a danger that leads may dry up without further information. The local council holds an emergency session to search for solutions. Their resolution is that Djolu Council cannot take in any more refugees. No one from the Government sees fit to visit the families of the bereaved.

FOUR MONTHS AGO

Police statistics reveal that fewer than one per cent of officers are white and the drop-out rate for white officers is several times higher than for black officers. Police chief Austin Kiamossi answers allegations that whites are being targeted as criminals by the force. 'The force does not discriminate against people on the basis of race. However we are not responsible for the fact that the colour of illegal workers' skins is white. It is a nonsense to suggest that policing of immigrant areas and cafes, identity checks and the occasional raid is evidence of racism. We have a duty towards law-abiding citizens to root out undesirable elements who can damage the social fabric by their illegal actions.'

THREE MONTHS AGO

Diego Rossi, an Italian immigrant, reports an attack on his son. The police upon arrival demand to see his papers. When he complains about their attitude, the police beat and handcuff him. He gets two broken ribs and is charged with assault. The magistrate, who is black, gives him six months.

TWO MONTHS AGO

The Prime Minister is proud to announce the success of the Alliance of African Nations' measures on tackling the refugee crisis. 'Genuine' refugees are now down to a third of the previous number within just a few months. 'I am convinced that justice has been done. These improvements will no doubt foster greater racial harmony within the country.'

A spot opinion poll shows her popularity is at an all-time high.

ONE MONTH AGO

Letter in *La Dernière Heure*.

Sir: Chris Johnson in his article alleges that Zaire is a racist country. For this to be true we would need the state to propagate a theory of black racial superiority, back it with legal clout and enforce it by the police force and the army. Needless to say this is not the case.

Neither civil liberties nor access to welfare are denied because of skin colour or ethnic origin. On the contrary, we positively favour our minorities by giving them protective legislation and public funding.

We live in a thriving multiracial, multicultural society and your paper has a duty to reflect this with unbiased and balanced coverage.

6:30 AM, OCTOBER 16

Jan Smith travels in the back of a van to the steel hotel – the detention centre. Her bag has been retained for 'further investigation'; her fingerprints are on file.

In her mind she is rehearsing the mistakes she's made. She shouldn't have tried to pass the passport off as her own. Of course they would find out – they must see fakes every day. Then shouting out 'Asylum! Asylum!' The security woman put a hand across her mouth to shut her up.

They took her to the white room and told her she'd be on the next plane back. Crying didn't help – 'all white shits try that'. In her rage and fear and desperation she had lifted up her blouse so they could see: The purplish plum-coloured bruises that circled her breasts and laced her stomach, the colour of the carpet in the long corridor. And the deeper red welts on her back. 'Another sexual pervert. How you get your kicks doesn't cut any ice with me.' That's when she fainted.

And now she was in the van. Everything went through her mind at once – her lost children, the days spent in hiding, friends who risked their lives hustling her past the checkpoints in their carts, the advice, 'When you get there you must appeal, ask to talk to a minister...'

Outside the sun had just slipped up from the horizon, firing the passing fields. It was one more thing she couldn't see in the windowless van.

Luc Vermeer's flight starts taxiing down the runway. He lies slumped in his seat, the strap still covering his mouth, fine beads of sweat clammy on his brow. He is listening to the chirpy music that is piping out overhead. Any minute now the cabin crew will be along to demonstrate how to save your life in an emergency. ■

Note: This story is based on real accounts of refugees and immigrants in Europe.

Bridge of Love

*Having a relationship across race is becoming more common. But it is still viewed as 'asking for trouble'. **Tomoyuki Iwashita** describes his own experience.*

My name is Tomoyuki Iwashita. I am Japanese and I married a British woman, Michèle le Roux, in 1991. International marriage is no longer an unusual event in Japan. However, I was the first person to get married to a non-Japanese person among my family, friends, neighbours, colleagues and acquaintances.

My parents told me: 'If the two of you have decided we have no objection, but you have to be prepared for the difficulties you will face from now on...' Most of our friends seemed to be quite surprised and pleased. Some of them said: 'Can we have free English lessons?' And most of the men I worked with said: 'Can your wife make a Japanese meal?' They seemed to think that an international marriage is very different from an 'ordinary' marriage.

Many people expect us to experience difficulties resulting from the clash of two different cultures. Of course we do have disagreements involving the 'culture gap' but most of these stem from habits taught by our parents when we were small. These may be influenced by local custom and superstition or are even specific to our particular families. For example, I always say to Michèle, 'Cover up your stomach when you go to sleep, or you will get a stomach-ache,' and she always refuses to do it, but I still think it's good advice...

Small things like that do not really cause difficulties because we knew from the start that we were from different countries, from different cultures and were different from each other as individuals. We do however have a similar sense of values, for example

East weds west: Michèle kept her name, Tomoyuki's family accepted.

in our attitude to the environment or to human relationships, and that is one of the reasons we got married. Of course we have serious arguments from time to time but most of these are due to individual misunderstandings. They could happen between any married couple. The major difficulties in terms of cultural and racial differences occur not between the two of us but between us as a couple and our families, or our friends, or the society around us.

Japanese society is very 'outsider-unfriendly' and there is strong prejudice against foreigners. Even though Japan has a long history of exchange with foreign countries the majority of Japanese people think it is still a monolingual, monoracial country.

This prejudice is epitomized in the word *gaijin*, which means 'foreigner', 'outsider', 'alien'. Though not in itself considered pejorative by Japanese the word may express many stereotypical images of non-Japanese people. White Westerners, for example, are seen as tall and huge, the men are very hairy, the women are blonde and very sexy...

With such stereotypes many Japanese have prejudices about international marriage as well. In general it is much commoner for white Western men to marry Japanese women than the other way around. However, it is more common for Japanese men to take partners from non-Western countries than it is for Japanese women. These gender prejudices may arise from notions of conquering and being conquered.

The gender issue interacts with racial prejudice. In general marriage with white Westerners is quite accepted, even welcomed, but marriage with black people or other Asians provokes different reactions. The Japanese see themselves as separate from the rest of Asia, perhaps with some sense of superiority to other countries. Such feelings are not openly stated.

What is often referred to as 'racial prejudice' may in fact be a whole mixture of cross-cultural difficulties, involving attitudes to the family, to food, to health, to hygiene...

When we got married we were living in Japan. Despite the fact that women have improved their position in many aspects of Japanese society since World War Two, they are still expected to give up work outside of the home upon marriage. There is perhaps the expectation that international marriage involves the non-Japanese wife coming to Japan, giving up her culture and devoting herself to the adoption of Japanese ways. Like other women who want to retain an independent identity after marriage, my wife wanted to keep her own surname. This upset my family. They kept asking: 'Doesn't she like the Iwashita family?' I had to explain and I think some of them understood what I meant, but some didn't.

In our case, most of the problems have been caused by a combination of cultural differences and our individual different characters and tastes. Both inter-cultural and intra-cultural variations are complex and multi-faceted. What is often referred to as 'racial prejudice' may in fact be a whole mixture of cross-cultural difficulties, involving attitudes to the family, to food, to health, to hygiene... There is also so much variation within any culture, with people coming from different backgrounds in terms of 'milieu', 'class', 'education' – all the factors which create different interests, tastes, senses of values and priorities. Sometimes it is hard to know if a particular difference is culture specific or if it stems from intra-cultural variation. Michèle comes from a very small family while I have dozens of aunts, uncles and cousins. Do we have different attitudes to 'the family' because of this, or because I am Japanese and she is not?

Misunderstandings are harder to deal with the closer one's relationship is with other people. Especially with members of one's own family or very good friends, problems become emotionally complicated.

The best solutions are those in which somebody is willing to make a compromise. The question is who? and how? I think the answer is: 'It depends'. For example, my family accepted Michèle's decision to keep her own name. But if somebody in the family addresses a letter to us as 'Mr and Mrs Iwashita', we see no need to make a fuss.

Compromise is not always easy to achieve; it can be painful and involves making sacrifices. In the issue of Michèle's name, the Iwashitas had to sacrifice their pride as a 'traditional Japanese family'. Michèle has to put up with continued mute appeals and some disapproval. And I am often stuck in the middle.

Sometimes we ask ourselves: 'Why do we have to put up with all these problems?' Sometimes I even think: 'Perhaps I should have married a Japanese woman who would have agreed with everybody'. But maybe that is just my stereotypical and racist view of Japanese women!

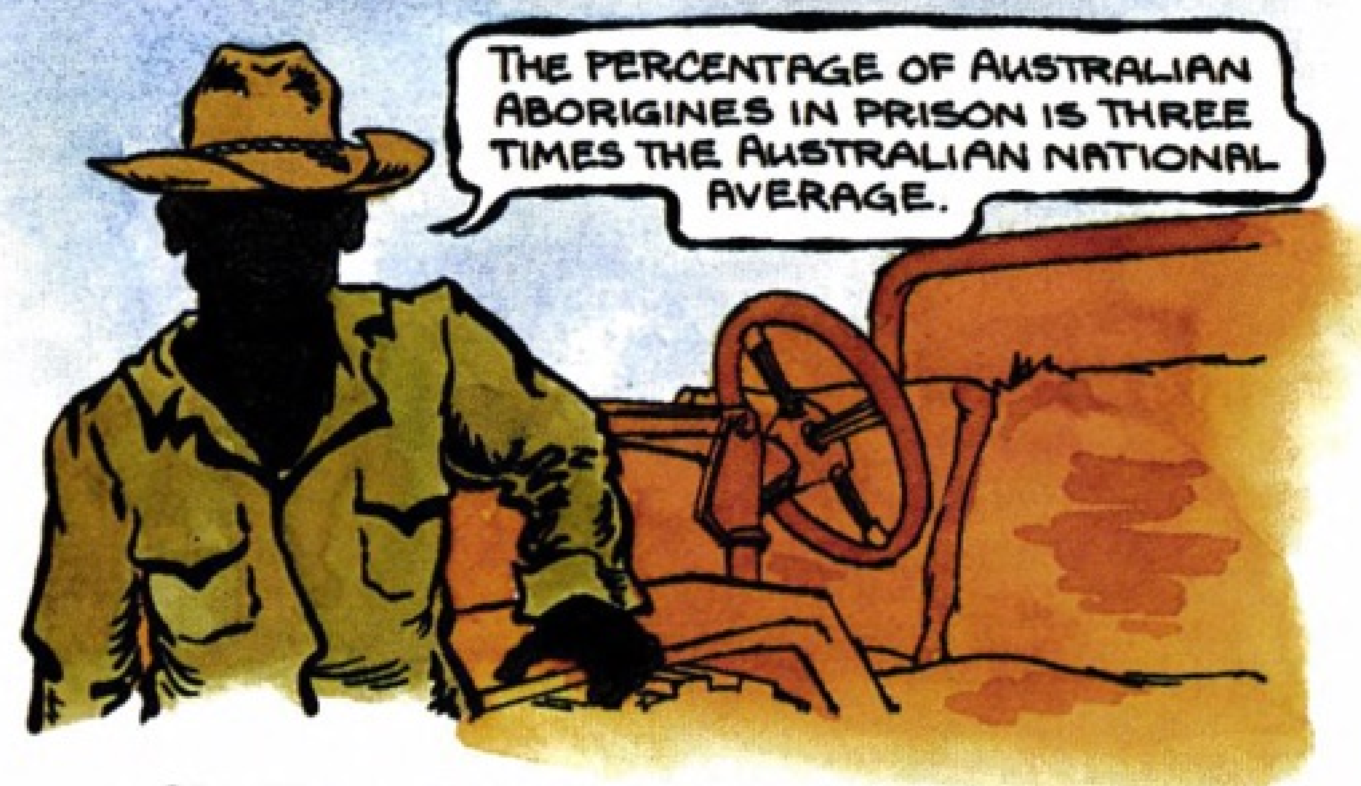
We continue making efforts to bridge the gaps. This is something that needs to be done within our relationship together and in our relationships with others around us. If we succeed, it will be because of something I haven't mentioned at all so far – love. ■

Tomoyuki Iwashita is a freelance writer. Michèle and he now live in Paris.

SIMPLY

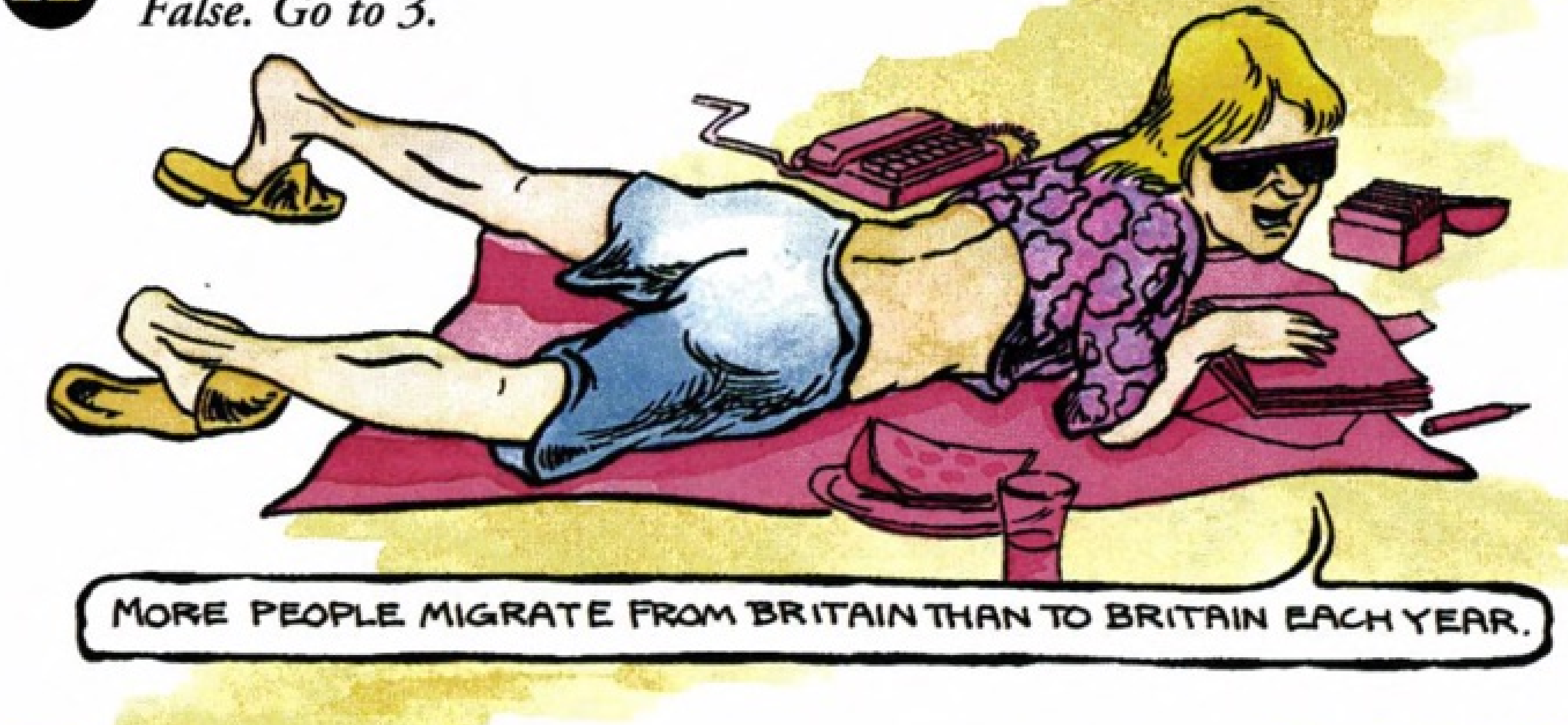
TRUE OR FALSE

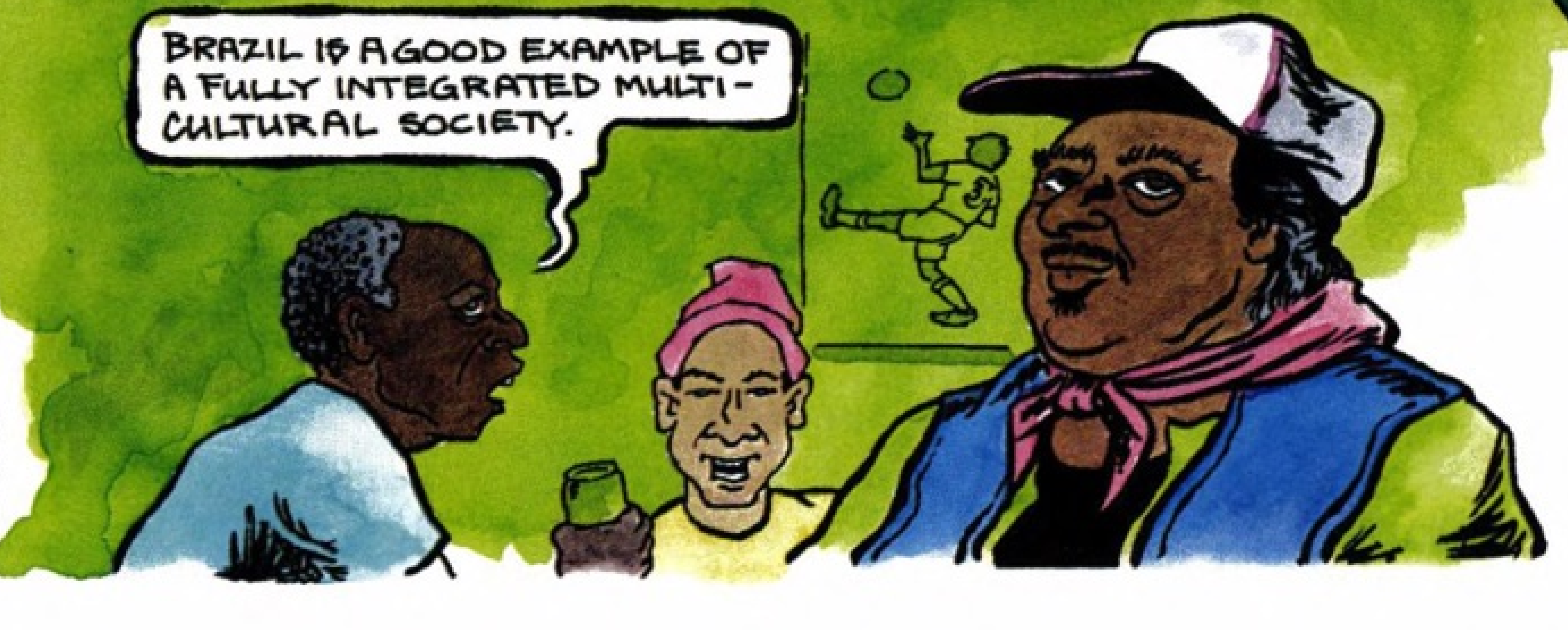
THINK you are up to speed on race issues worldwide? Well, all these people are out to test your knowledge. Start by answering 'True' or 'False' to one of the statements. Depending on your answer you will be directed to someone else who has another statement to offer. If you get all the answers right you'll only have to encounter each person once, arriving eventually at the person and statement you started with. But if things start going wrong... well then you'll keep meeting the same ones over and over again and despair of ever escaping. When you have finished – or can't stand it any more – you'll find the answers on page *27*.


THE PERCENTAGE OF AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES IN PRISON IS THREE TIMES THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL AVERAGE.

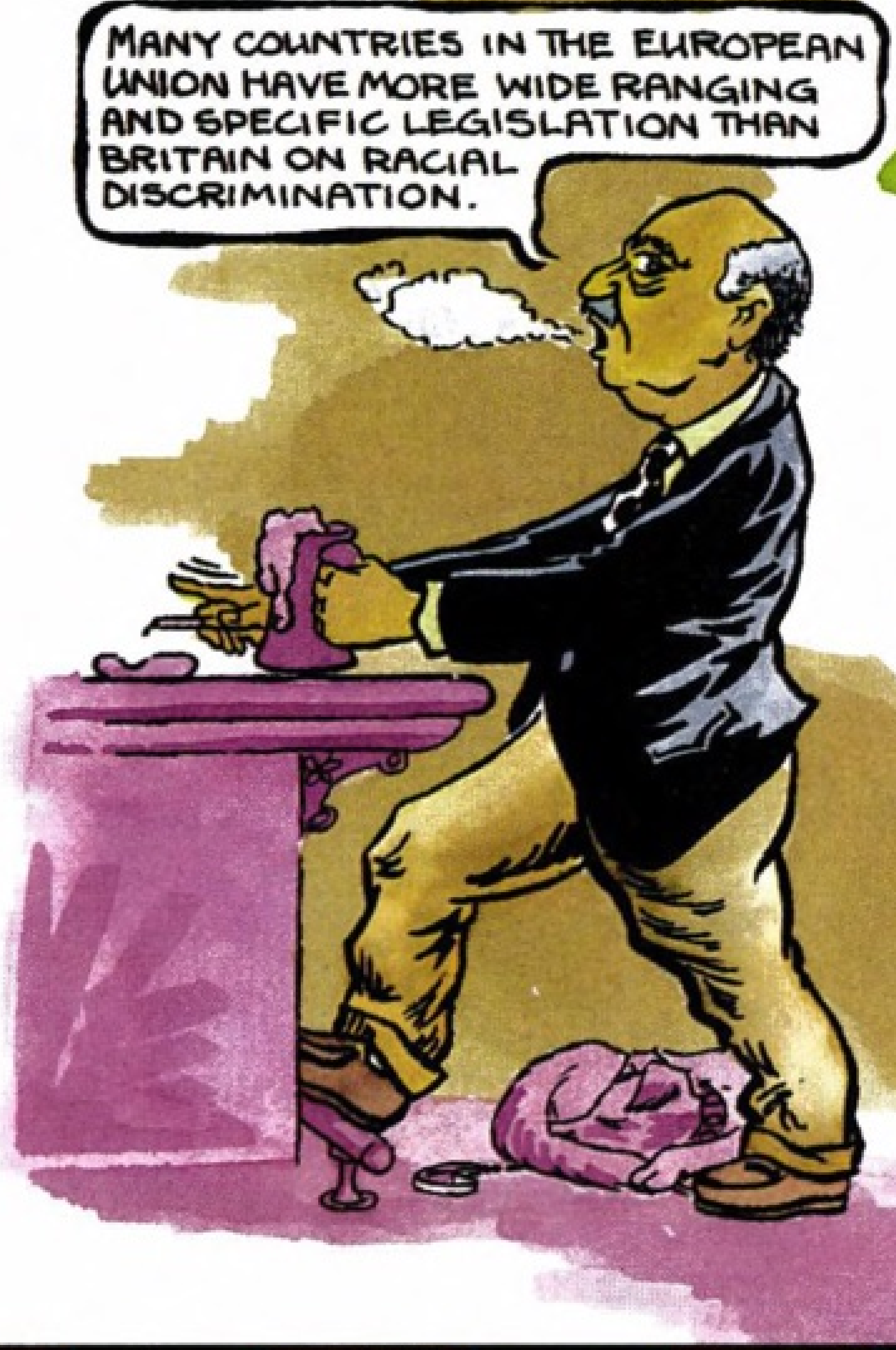
1 *True. Go to 5.*
False. Go to 8.

12 *True. Go to 4.*
False. Go to 3.

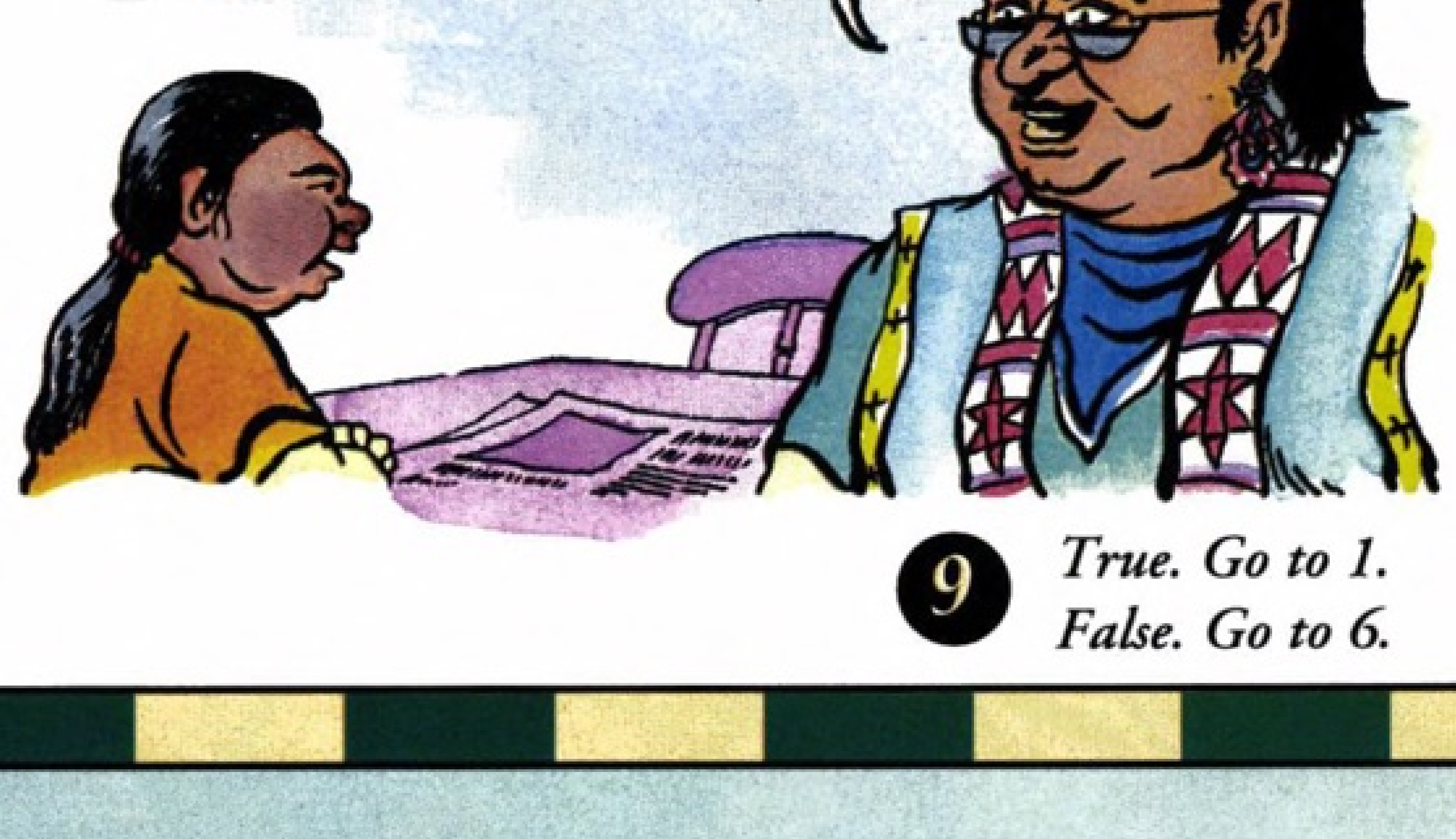

MORE PEOPLE MIGRATE FROM BRITAIN THAN TO BRITAIN EACH YEAR.


BRAZIL IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF A FULLY INTEGRATED MULTI-CULTURAL SOCIETY.

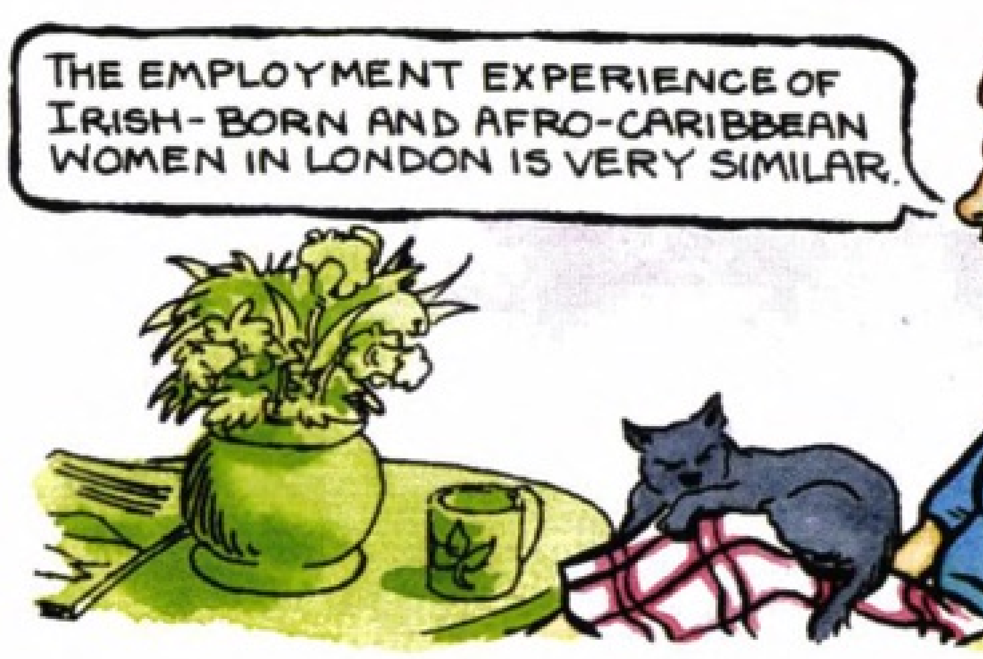
11 *True. Go to 4.*
False. Got to 2.


MANY COUNTRIES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION HAVE MORE WIDE RANGING AND SPECIFIC LEGISLATION THAN BRITAIN ON RACIAL DISCRIMINATION.

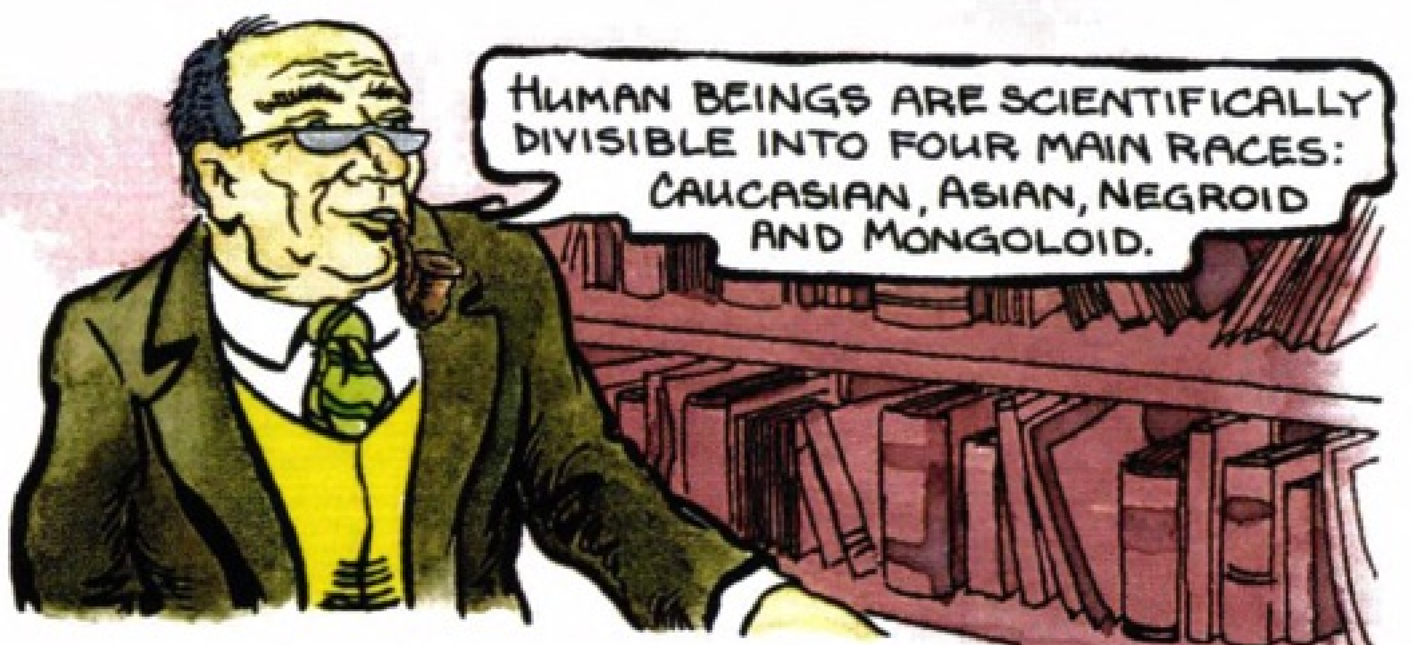
10 *True. Go to 6.*
False. Go to 3.


RESERVATIONS FOR NATIVE AMERICANS OFFER BASIC HOUSING WITH JUST ELECTRICITY AND A SINGLE WATER TAP.

9 *True. Go to 1.*
False. Go to 6.

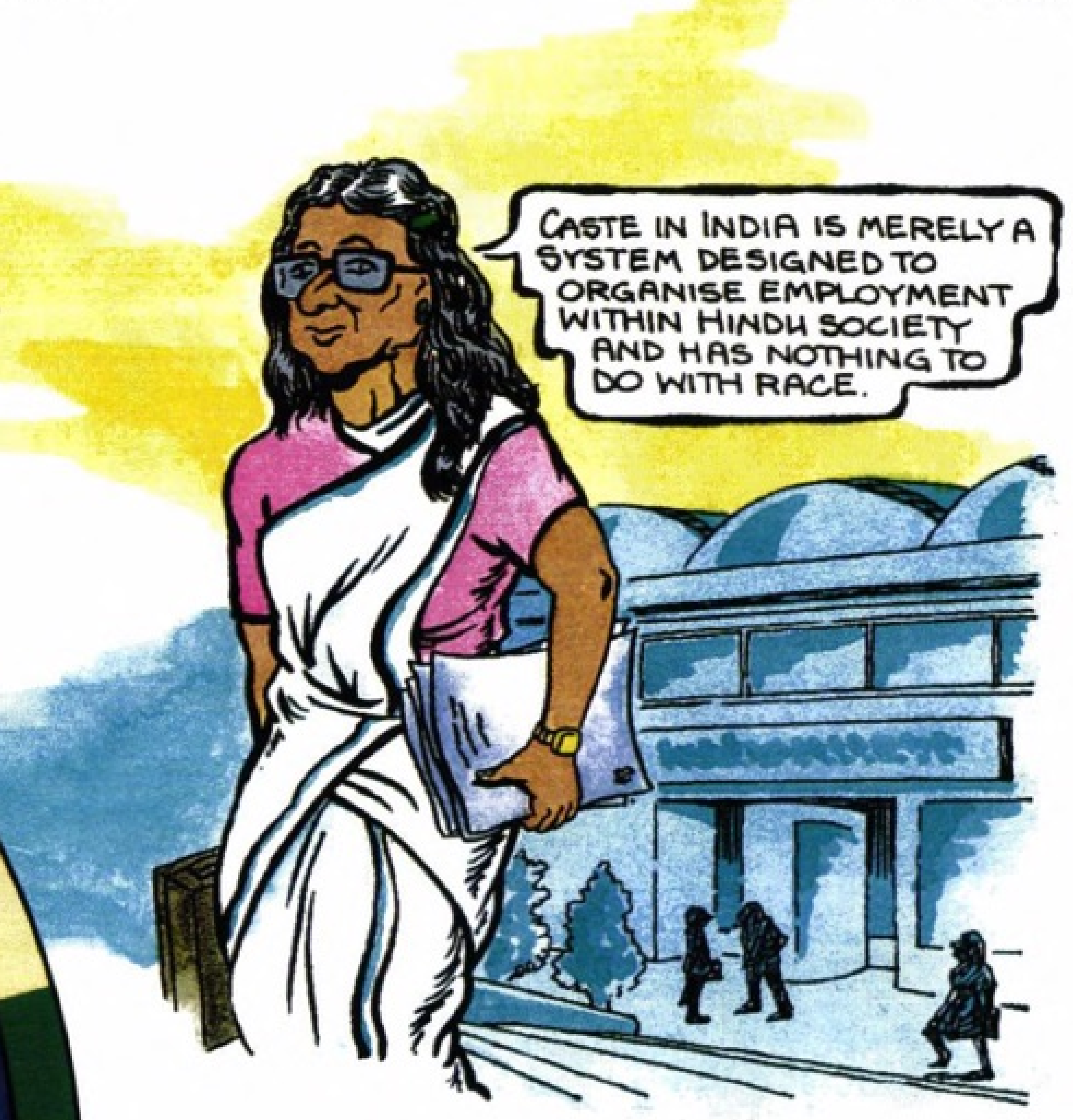

THE EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE OF IRISH-BORN AND AFRO-CARIBBEAN WOMEN IN LONDON IS VERY SIMILAR.

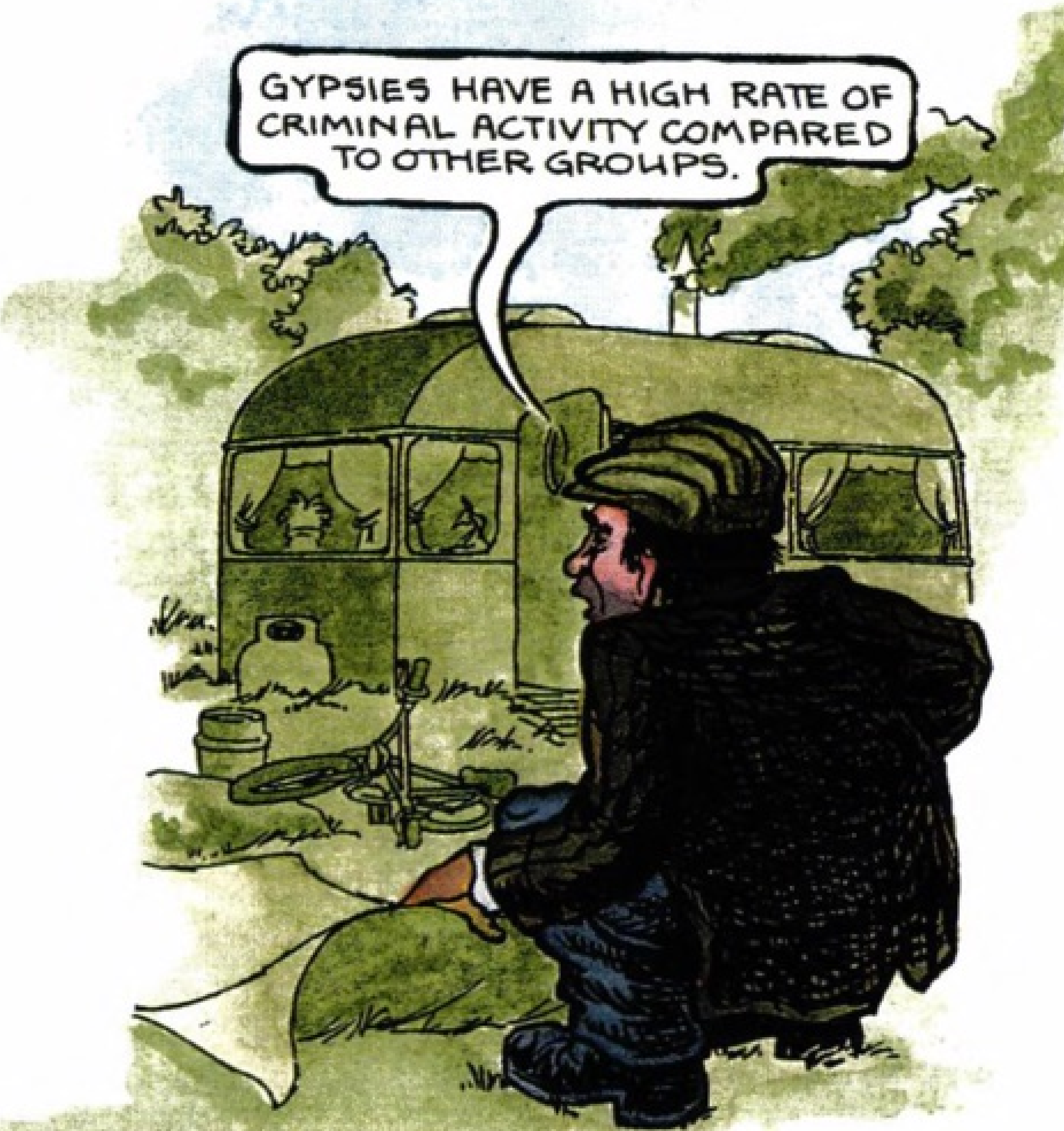
2 *True. Go to 7.*
False. Go to 9.


HUMAN BEINGS ARE SCIENTIFICALLY DIVISIBLE INTO FOUR MAIN RACES: CAUCASIAN, ASIAN, NEGROID AND MONGOLOID.

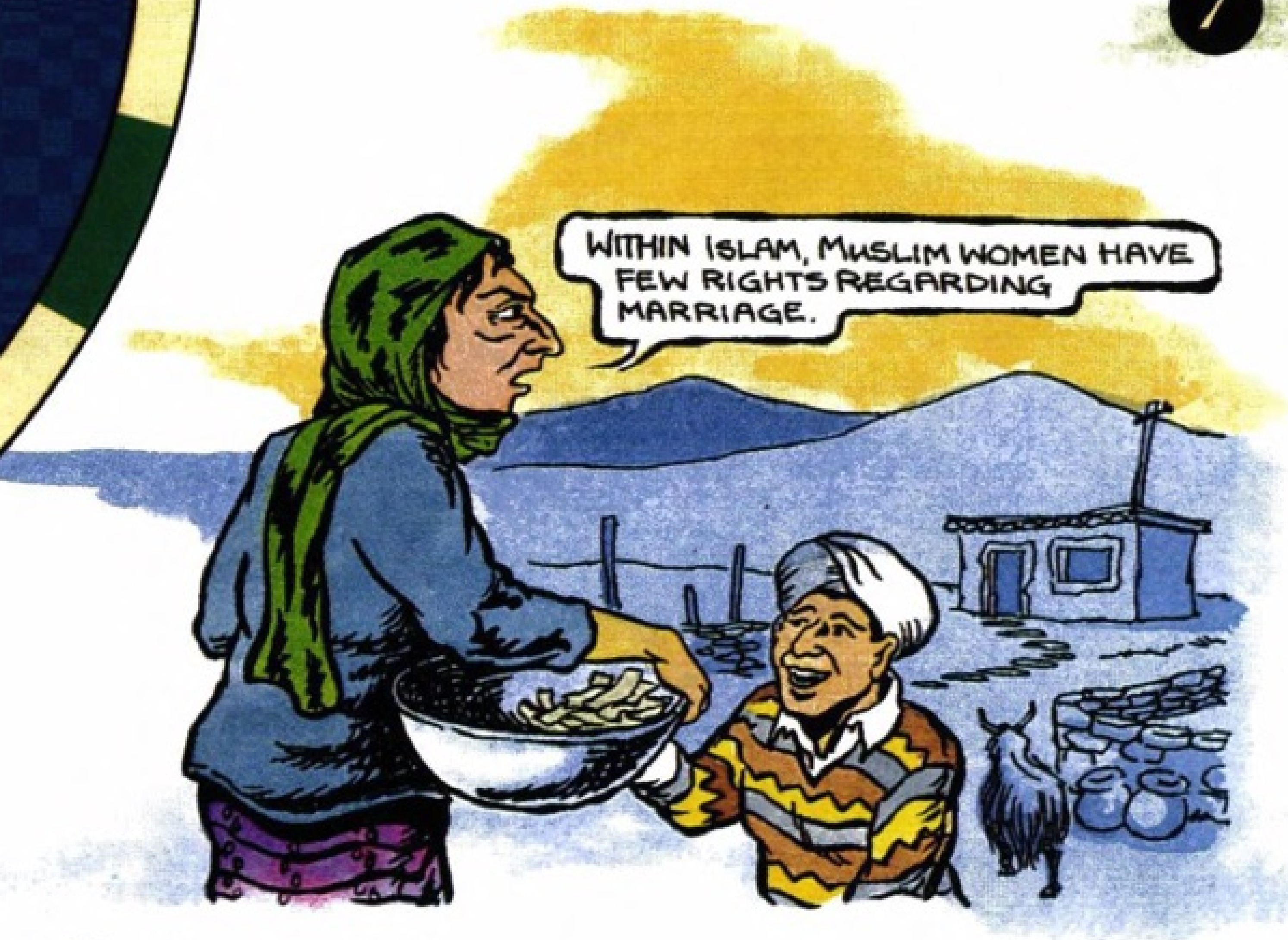
3 *True. Go to 12.*
False. Go to 5.

4 *True. Go to 10.*
False. Go to 1.

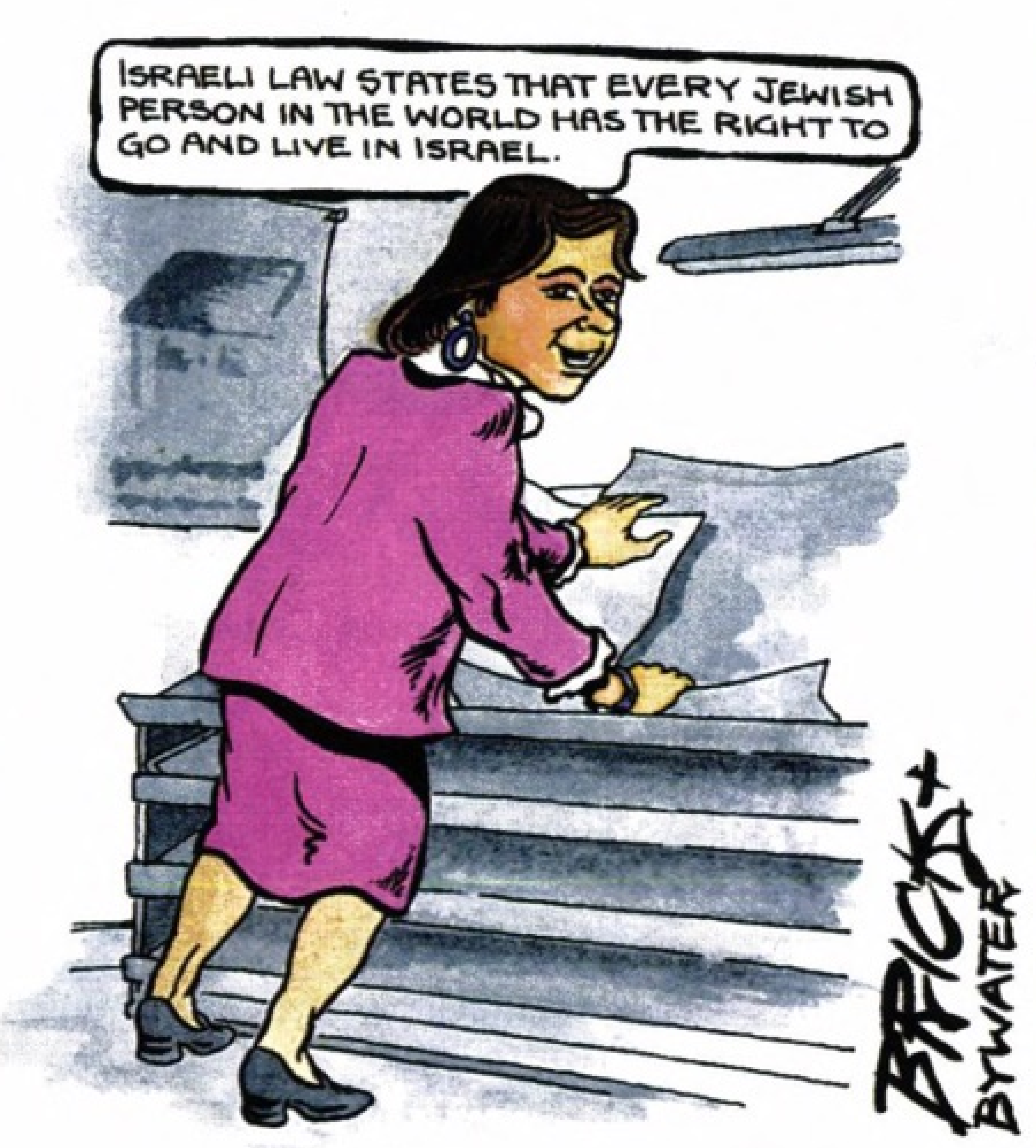

CASTE IN INDIA IS MERELY A SYSTEM DESIGNED TO ORGANISE EMPLOYMENT WITHIN HINDU SOCIETY AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH RACE.

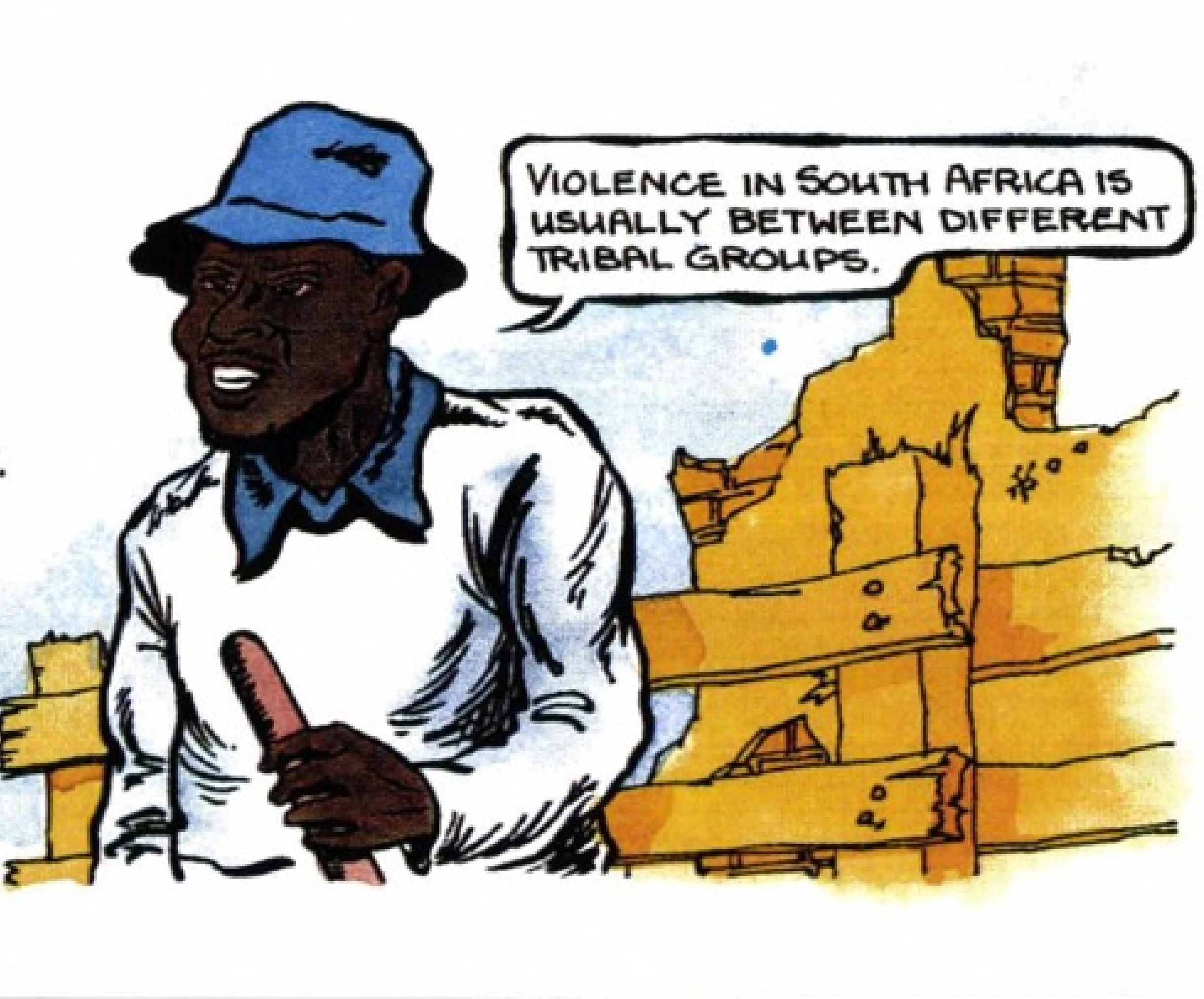

GYPSIES HAVE A HIGH RATE OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY COMPARED TO OTHER GROUPS.

7 *True. Go to 11.*
False. Go to 9.


WITHIN ISLAM, MUSLIM WOMEN HAVE FEW RIGHTS REGARDING MARRIAGE.

5 *True. Go to 7.*
False. Go to 11.


ISRAELI LAW STATES THAT EVERY JEWISH PERSON IN THE WORLD HAS THE RIGHT TO GO AND LIVE IN ISRAEL.
BRICK+ BYWATER


VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA IS USUALLY BETWEEN DIFFERENT TRIBAL GROUPS.

6 *True. Go to 8.*
False. Go to 12.

8 *True. Go to 10.*
False. Go to 2.

Answers on page 27

ILLUSTRATIONS: BRICK & BYWATER. QUIZ DEVISED BY DEREK SANKER AT LEEDS DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION CENTRE

Sensitivity trainers and the real thing

Multicultural Toronto is abuzz with professionals willing to zip into workplaces and zap them with anti-racism workshops. But how many are committed to real change? ***Erica Simmons*** *investigates.*

JEANETTE L ANDREWS-BERTHEAU

THERE'S big money in anti-racism education in Toronto these days and a new breed of educators is emerging for whom it's less a radical commitment than a lucrative career path. Long-term anti-racism educators are disturbed by this development and wonder what will become of their movement now that the provincial Government includes an 'Anti-Racism Secretariat' and big business is hosting 'diversity management' training workshops.

Even the names of the workshops are changing. They now go by names such as 'sensitivity training', 'cross-cultural communications', 'race relations' or 'human rights management', and favour broadening white people's cultural horizons over criticizing the status quo.

The new demand for workplace workshops means that many business management consultants have become instantly conversant with the relevant terminology and added anti-racism training to their portfolios. Even young university graduates with degrees in sociology or anthropology are looking for a piece of the action.

Equality educator Charles Novogrodsky calls these careerists 'anti-racism technicians' and says they are mainly interested in 'getting people to enjoy the benefits of a woman wearing a sari in the workplace'. While the focus on encouraging tolerant attitudes is a sound starting place for any workshop, the more political educators are concerned with structural change. 'For us,' says Venier Wong, 'it's about power – about who gets to make the decisions and who doesn't.'

Activists like Wong believe workshops must address systemic racism – the ways that racist thought becomes so embedded in institutional structure and practice that it is often hard to identify. People in an all-white workplace, for example, often assume that no people of colour have applied for a job. In a workshop, Wong will discuss how hiring procedures may be discriminatory. If employees of colour are clustered at the bottom of the office hierarchy, Wong will argue that racism is in evidence.

Feel-good factors

This is a far cry from the new mainstream workshops where, as veteran activist-educator Enid Lee points out, 'they might not even mention the word "racism" in case it might upset somebody'. If the 'technicians' do use some of the same language as the radicals they are still likely to avoid discussing systemic racism. They shy away from explaining to white participants that however non-racist their personal views, they derive certain benefits from being white in a racially discriminatory society.

'These workshops focus on prejudice,' explains Tina Lopes, 'and have everyone feeling good about feeling bad about doing nothing.' The real need – to get beyond guilt and paralysis and actually work to change things – remains unaddressed.

The radicals, on the other hand, do tackle the possibility of large-scale organizational change. Aware that companies may use workshops just to improve their public image, many radical activists will refuse to facilitate a workshop unless the organization hiring them agrees to follow up with action. 'A lot of it is public relations,' says Lee. 'There'll be a workshop in lieu of action.'

Sometimes the people who hire an anti-racism educator don't realize what's on the agenda. Chrys Louis had to end a workshop in mid-session after the executive director, hearing his employees grapple with the idea of structural change, said: 'It won't happen here. We have policies and if something happens we know how to deal with it.'

... as a black man with dreadlocks he faces 'instant suspicion' when he is introduced as the consultant who will run the session.

Predictably the more radical activists don't often get called by businesses and so do most of their work in community organizations and for the Government. But even within public-sector work, there is some debate about how much educational workshops can accomplish. It's difficult to evaluate the impact of a workshop. Lee, who works primarily with schools, says that teachers in workshops 'say all the right things' and their schools may develop good policies, but she spends a lot of time in classrooms to assess whether the experience of students actually improves as a result. Most activist educators stress the need to maintain contact with an organization long after a workshop ends and, in particular, to keep offering advice and support to those who are trying to fight for change.

White bias

The ground a workshop covers depends partly on the needs and situation of the participants and partly on the concerns of the facilitator. Chrys Louis believes that 'most anti-racism training is designed for white people who have had very little experience of or exposure to people of different cultures'. Venier Wong, however, says that when she does a workshop, she is particularly concerned with offering support to people of colour who have experienced racism in their workplace. 'A large part of it is just validating that this bloody thing is happening and that they're not going crazy.'

The race and ethnicity of the facilitator is also important. Chrys Louis says that as a black man with dreadlocks he faces 'instant suspicion' when he is introduced as the consultant who will run the session. Lopes, who co-facilitated a workshop with Louis, says: 'You could see the fear rise in the room when he walked in. One woman started to choke on her coffee.'

Black anti-racism educators must first fight for professional credibility in the face of hostility from some white participants. 'Who do you think you are, calling yourself a consultant?', one paricipant asked Lee.

Racism is also felt in who gets hired to do the training sessions. 'People who are white are generally preferred as anti-racism trainers,' says Enid Lee. 'And they are generally better paid than people of colour.' Lee adds that this is one reason why many people of colour have found it necessary to attach themselves to white associates.

Organizations often assume that they will be biased and will inflict personal grievances on participants. Aside from the racism inherent in this assumption, activists are infuriated by the implication that they should be neutral in order to be credible. 'There are sides that are moral, and sides that are immoral,' says Lee. 'I think you have to take sides.'

This need to take sides is perhaps the biggest difference between the activists and the slick professionals – the 'technicians'. While the technicians may be sincere proponents of greater fairness and mutual tolerance, they are unlikely to forgo a lucrative contract because those doing the hiring do not seem committed to substantive change. But for activist educators workshops are only one part of a multifaceted struggle which includes street protest and grassroots community organization.

'You cannot do this work without being an activist,' Enid Lee says. 'When I think about the horrendous things that have gone on in this city between the black community and the police, I ask myself where the hell are the people who do anti-racism work and make hundreds of thousands of dollars? Where are they?'

Lee does this work out of personal and social committment. But Chrys Louis worries that very few of the people now dominating the field have such conviction. 'With them there will be no movement,' he says. 'That group is taking control, and taking the profit, and anti-racism is turning into an industry.' ■

Erica Simmons is a freelance journalist based in Toronto.

T OR F QUIZ ANSWERS

1. FALSE It is 14 times the national average. Young Australian Aboriginal men are often arrested for minor offences for which white people would be let off. One million Aborigines a year are arrested, which is an average of four times a year for every Aboriginal woman, man and child. Each month two or more Aborigines die in custody.

2. TRUE Both are heavily concentrated in the lowest paid social classes. In London unemployment amongst the Irish was second to that of the Afro-Caribbean community. The Irish are the largest ethnic minority in Britain and are the only immigrant group whose life expectancy goes down when they enter the country.

3. FALSE The notion of race is considered to be a scientific fallacy. The genetic differences between ethnic groups are so small and have so much overlap as to make them a spurious means of defining difference.

4. FALSE The caste system results in the segregation of 'lower' castes who get some of the worst jobs, some of which are tantamount to slavery to the upper castes. Police and upper-caste atrocities against them are routine. One is born into one's caste and intermarriage between upper and lower castes is forbidden. Upper caste Hindus refuse physical contact with lower caste members and objects handled by them. The lower castes (about 13.8 per cent of India's 844 million population) are therefore perceived as a race apart.

5. FALSE The rights of women are explained in the Qu'ran and in the Hadith (the examples set by the life of the Prophet Mohammed). Muslim women are entitled to refuse marriage. They are entitled to divorce with a just economic settlement and have clearly defined inheritance rights. Patriarchy is more to blame for their disadvantage in certain communities than scripture.

6. FALSE Many Zulus support the ANC. Most of the violence before the elections was between supporters of INKATHA and the anti-apartheid supporters of the ANC. The division is usually along political lines rather than 'tribal'. But the news media often portray violence in Africa as 'tribal' and violence elsewhere as political or 'ethnic'.

7. FALSE Prejudice against gypsies, travellers or Romanies creates negative myths and is a worldwide phenomenon. Almost half-a-million gypsies were put to death under the Nazis, and anti-gypsy feeling seems to be growing again today.

8. TRUE This is known as the law of return and applies to all Jews whether or not they have ever lived in Israel. At the same time nearly 3.5 million Palestinians living in exile or as refugees are not allowed to return to their homeland.

9. FALSE Most housing is inadequate and substandard. For example, 46 per cent of the comparatively well-off Navajo nation have no electricity, 54 per cent have no indoor plumbing at all.

10. FALSE Britain is the only country with such specific and wideranging legislation as the 1976 Race Relations Act.

11. FALSE There are some 600 black-consciousness groups in Brazil. They argue that discrimination against Brazil's 70 million black people is commonplace and the much-vaunted notion of 'racial democracy' is a myth. Indigenous peoples are persecuted and their numbers are in decline.

12. TRUE Emigration from the UK is greater than immigration.

ACTION

Groups to contact...

AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

Network Waitangi PO Box 5510, Wellesley St., Tamaki Makarau, Auckland. Tel: (9) 378 9816.

CCANZ Programme on Racism PO Box 9573, Auckland. Tel: (9) 525 4179.

Maori Legal Service PO Box 6528, Wellington. Tel: (4) 473 1781. Fax: (4) 473 1781.

Maori Congress Foreign Policy Committee PO Box 5079, Wellington. Tel: (4) 499 4605. Fax: (4) 499 4608.

Matariki PO Box 1375, Dunedin. Tel: (3) 4773 395. Fax (3) 4740 736.

AUSTRALIA

Campaign Against Racial Exploitation PO Box 159, Mt Lawley, WA 6050.

Committee to Defend Black Rights PO Box 498, Broadway, NSW 2007. Tel: (2) 698 9166.

Aboriginal Support Group 156 George St., Fitzroy, VIC 3065.

CANADA

Anti-Racist Action PO Box 664, Stn C. Toronto, Ont. M6J 3S1. Tel: (416) 631 8835. Challenging the rise of far-Right racism.

Canadian Centre on Racism and Prejudice is an autonomous research centre. Located in Montreal it can be reached on (514) 495 3954.

Salmon Arm Coalition Against Racism 3521 20th Ave. NE, Vancouver, BC V1E 4M4.

The National Association of Friendship Centres 396 Cooper St., Ottawa, Ont. K2P 2H7. Tel: (613) 563 4844. Fax: (613) 594 3428. Rights advocacy for indigenous peoples.

World Council of Indigenous Peoples 100 Argyle, 2nd Floor, Ottawa ON K2P 1B6. Tel: (613) 230 9030.

UK

Commission for Racial Equality Elliot House, 10/12 Allington St., London SW1E 5EH. Tel: (71) 828 7022. Offices in Leicester, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and Edinburgh.

The Runnymede Trust 11 Princelet St., London E1 6QH. Tel: (71) 375 1496.

Institute of Race Relations 2-6 Leeke St, King's Cross Road, London WC1X 9HS. Tel: (71) 837 0041. Publishes a wide range of topical texts.

Campaign Against Racism and Fascism BM Box 8784, London WC1N 3XX. Tel: (71) 837 0041.

Searchlight 37B New Cavendish St., London W1 8JR. Tel: (71) 284 4040. Working against the far-Right.

Anti-Racist Alliance PO Box 150, London WC1X 9AT. Tel: (71) 278 6869.

Anti-Nazi League PO Box 2566, London N4 2HG. Tel: (71) 924 0333.

Survival International 310 Edgware Road, London W2 1DY. Tel: (71) 723 5535. International campaigns for indigenous rights.

US

Center for Democratic Renewal PO Box 50469, Atlanta GA 30302. Tel: (404) 221 0025.

Centre for Third World Organizing 1218 East 21st St., Oakland, Ca. 94606. Tel: (510) 533 7583.

National Congress of American Indians 900 Pennsylvania Ave, Washington DC 20003. Tel: (202) 546 9404.

Southwest Organizing Project 211 10th St. SW Albuquerque, NM 87102. Tel: (505) 247 8832.

People's Institute 1444 N. Johnson St., New Orleans, La. 70116. Offers training in anti-racist awareness.

Books worth Reading...

When Hate Groups Come to Town by the US Center for Democratic Renewal (Montgomery, Alabama, 1992) is a handbook of community responses to the far-Right. It's first chapter offers one of the clearest insights on the roots of racism. Michael Banton's **Racial Consciousness** (Longman, 1988) is an illuminating dissection of the idea of race. Rodolfo Stavenhagen's examination of **The Ethnic Question** (UN University Press, Tokyo, 1990) disentangles the role of ethnicity in conflict worldwide. For an anthropologist's view read Thomas Hyland Eriksen's **Ethnicity and Nationalism** (Pluto Press, London, Boulder, Colorado, 1993). **Race** by Studs Terkel is a gripping collection of interviews with people from all walks of life in the US. Passionate and punchy this is essential reading. On state racism two short, well-researched and shocking books – **Inside Racist Europe** by Liz Fekete and Frances Weber (Institute of Race Relations, London, 1994) and **Racism: The Destruction of Civil and Political Liberties** by Anti-Racist Alliance and the National Council for Liberties (London, 1993). On race gender and feminism, the writings of bell hooks are accessible and wise. Her first book **Ain't I a Woman: black women and feminism** (Pluto Press, London 1981) is a good starting point. On interpersonal issues **Lesbians Talk Making Black Waves** by Valerie Mason-John and Ann Khambatta (Scarlet Press, London, 1993) is wide-ranging yet succinct and of use to all readers. On scientific racism Stephen Jay Gould's **The Mismeasure of Man** (*sic.* Penguin, London, 1992) takes on IQ testing, while **Anti-Racist Science Teaching** edited by Dawn Gill and Les Levidow (Free Association Books, London, 1987) is strong on strategy for the classroom.

Special thanks for help in researching this issue to: Franca Tranza at Survival International, Suhith Shivanath and Olukemi Williams at World University Service, Liz Fekete at Institute of Race Relations, Peter Wade at the University of Liverpool, David Owen at National Ethnic Minority Data Archive, Oxford DEC, UNRISD, UNHCR, The Runnymede Trust, Pat Stocker, Patricia Sellick at Minority Rights Group, Deborah Eade at Oxfam, Liberty, Human Rights Watch/Africa, and Center for Democratic Renewal.

SOME THINGS TO DO...

The workplace is a good place to put your anti-racism into practice. Here's a checklist:

- Is there a written equal opportunity policy which includes plans for hiring and promoting staff fairly and is supported and monitored by both unions and management?
- Does the staff include people from minorities and reflect the multicultural mix in society at large?
- Do advertisements for recruiting new employees state a commitment to equal opportunities and are they placed in newspapers or magazines which are likely to be read by minority groups?
- Is it recognised that women from minority groups face the double disadvantage of both race and gender discrimination?
- Are people from minority groups represented on interviewing and selection committees?
- Do all employees get training in Equal Opportunities?

Hate groups often fuel racist behaviour among people who might not otherwise be so inclined. Here are some ways of combating racism in your area:

- Keep informed, document the problem and inform others.
- Speak out and create a moral barrier to hate activity.
- Build coalitions; violence against any particular group can be used to legitimize activities against other groups as well.
- Provide support and aid to victims of racist groups.
- Work with those targeted as potential recruits. People join hate groups out of frustration, fear, anger and the need to blame someone else for their troubles. Provide them with more rational political, social and economic explanations.
- Target your own community. Hate groups manipulate community tensions in order to exist.
- Encourage anti-racist youth activity. Most hate groups rely on disaffected youth.

PROSTITUTION

AIDS homecoming

Bombay brothels evict sick Nepali girls

MAYA squats on the floor in a women's shelter near Kathmandu, her sunken eyes staring out from her face. Her head bowed, she mumbles a story of inhuman conditions and suffering. As if shocked by her own words, she nervously presses her painfully thin fingers to her lips. Maya was a prostitute in an Indian brothel and now she has AIDS.

At the age of 14 Maya was taken from her home in the hills near Gorkha, West Nepal, and imprisoned by an Indian brothel owner. 'I had gone to the cinema with my friend,' she recalls. 'A man approached me and said he would take me to Bombay to earn lots of money as a film star.' Maya says she was kidnapped and remembers nothing of the journey to India. The man sold her to a brothel in Bombay's Belahouse district.

Induction into brothel life was swift. Maya was starved, beaten and raped until her resistance was broken. She spent the next 15 years of her life in the brothel, living in a cramped room where she and other girls received up to 10 clients a day.

Maya's story is typical of thousands of girls who are traded across Nepal's open border with India to satisfy the clientele of red-light districts in Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta. As increasing numbers of Nepali prostitutes return home with the AIDS virus, their plight has begun to draw the attention of international aid agencies.

PETER & LUCY HOLLIDAY

Women in the mountain villages of Nepal are targets of trade.

According to the Indian Health Organization there are approximately 100,000 girls from Nepal in India's brothels, a third of whom are the victims of forced prostitution. As many as 7,000 join them every year.

The roots of the trafficking network lie in Nepal's remote hill villages, where agents, often local people, earn commission on the sale of girls to the Indian brothel owners. It is big business. The profits are reaped by the leaders of the trafficking gangs who have other interests in Nepal's hotel and carpet-manufacturing industries. Despite strict anti-trafficking laws few arrests result in conviction and accusations of police collusion and political corruption abound.

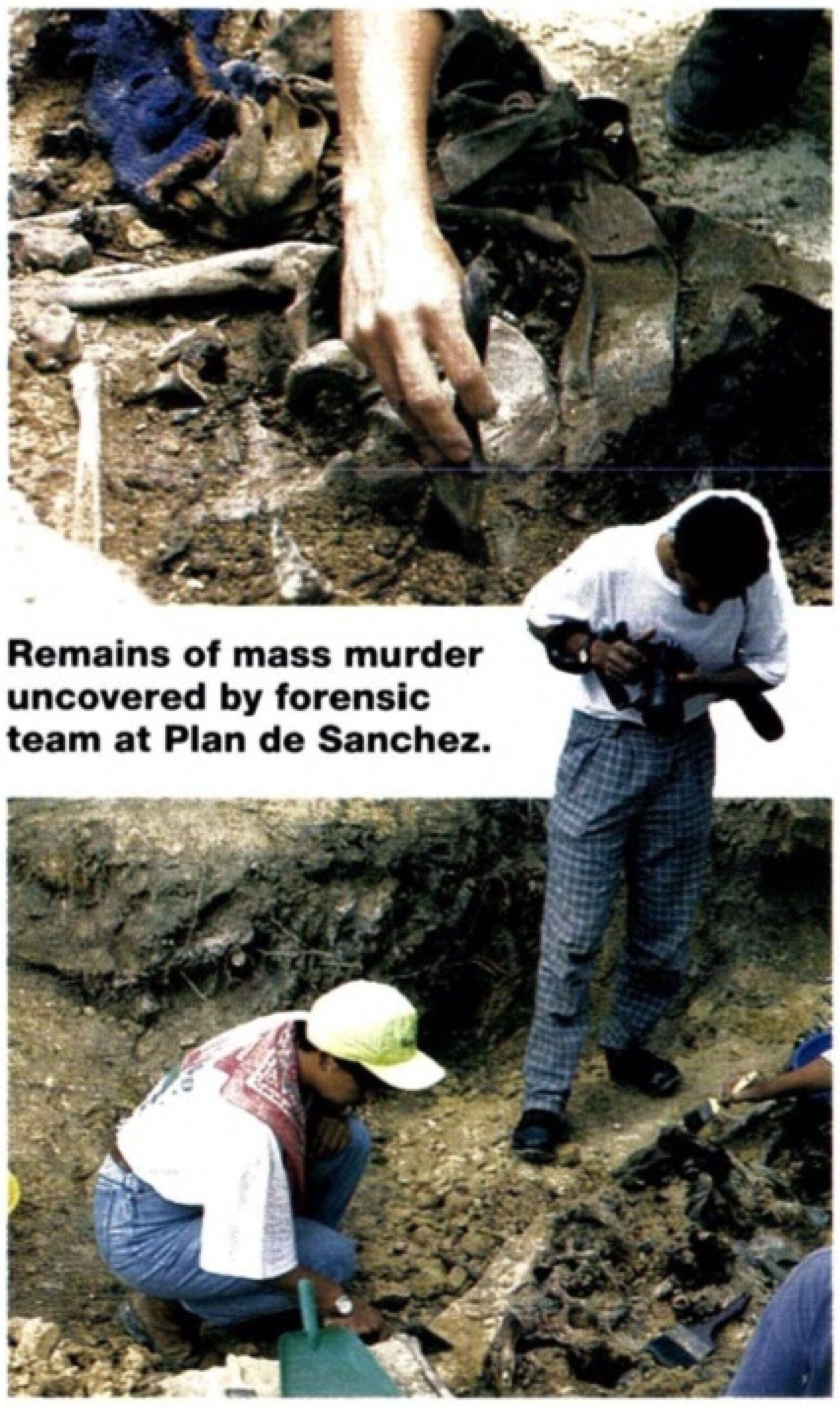
When they become too ill to work the girls are no longer of use to the brothel owners and are sent home. Maya was thrown out of the brothel two years ago when she was discovered to be HIV positive. She had no choice but to return to Nepal, leaving her four-year-old daughter in the hands of the brothel madam.

Routine testing of prostitutes for HIV by the Indian health authorities has led to an increasing number of girls being sent home to Nepal. World Health Organization figures confirm that half of the prostitutes in Bombay – of whom 40 per cent are from Nepal – are HIV positive.

Some advocate the legalization of prostitution in Asia as the only means to control the trafficking. Others believe slow progress can be made by increasing awareness of the issue. For Maya, there is some hope that her daughter will be found and brought to join her in Nepal. At least one little girl, perhaps, can then be spared the life of degradation suffered by so many. ■

Lucy Holliday

HUMAN RIGHTS



Remains of mass murder uncovered by forensic team at Plan de Sanchez.

MARIAN POCOCK

Unearthed

Evidence of massacres in Guatemala

JUST outside the small village of Plan de Sanchez, a two-minute climb from the dirt road, lies the site of a massacre. It took place on 18 July 1982 at the height of the Guatemalan Army's counter-insurgency campaign.

Today a team of forensic anthropologists is unearthing the remains of an estimated 200 people who were murdered here.

The Equipo de Antropologia Forense de Guatemala was established in 1992 by a group of students and young professionals on the model of the Forensic Anthropology Team that investigates disappearances in Argentina. This is the most recent exhumation in a total of eight carried out so far.

'People are still suffering 12 years later,' whispers one man whose wife and family lie in the grave. 'Until the bodies have been dug up and we are able to have proper burials we will not be able to live in peace or experence any kind of tranquillity.'

More than 100,000 people have been killed and 40,000 'disappeared' during an attempted genocide of the largely Mayan highland peoples of Guatemala by Government forces. Civilian groups have called for a Commission that would name those responsible. A recent accord in Oslo between the Guatemalan Government and the rebel alliance agreed to set up a 'Truth Commission' to establish 'institutional responsibility' rather than name individuals.

Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu is critical of the accord, saying that there are 'frequently-mentioned surnames in the history of Guatemala who are implicated in the repression'.

The Oslo agreement was reached under heavy international pressure, in particular from the 'Group of Friends of the Negotiations' (Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, the US, Norway and Spain). The Guatemalan Government has been offered financial inducements to create 'stable' conditions in the country. There is no prospect of a military victory for the rebels. But a lasting peace is unlikely to be established unless those responsible for mass murder are brought to justice. ■

Marian Pocock

GUYANA

Georgetown pirates

The brigands are back

THE scourge of the seventeenth-century Caribbean has returned to haunt Port Georgetown. Armed pirates are staging almost daily attacks on ships entering the harbour and shipping companies are buying extra insurance to make up for losses.

'The ships are actually coming prepared to be pirated and vandalized,' says Harbour Master Steve Thomas. Sometimes almost all the vessels entering the port each day are attacked, including fishing boats and even a coast-guard vessel robbed earlier this year.

'This indicates the extent of the problem. The ship was a military vessel, but they could not care less,' says Thomas.

About 22 ocean-going ships call at the port each week from New York, Miami, London or the Netherlands to unload cars and other consumer goods. Georgetown is the export point for local products, including rice, bauxite, wildlife, sugar and rum.

Thomas worries ships will be reluctant to come to this South American country because of its renewed 'seventeenth-century trade'. Port Georgetown has been singled out in international shipping bulletins and ship owners forced to buy special coverage for the Guyana leg of any voyage.

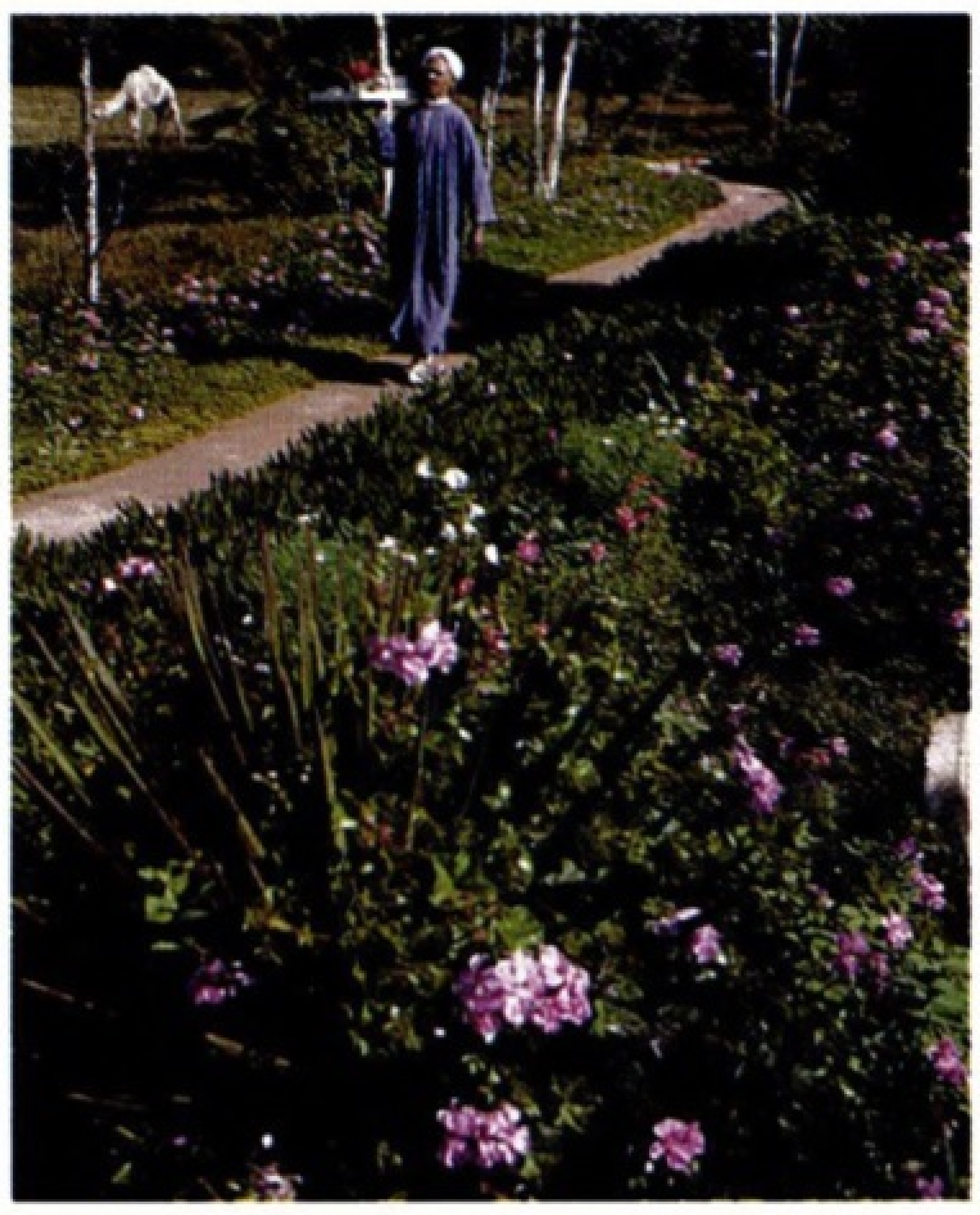
Armed groups of mostly young Guyanese men in small boats move up alongside the ships, in both the Atlantic Ocean and the Demerara River, which runs seven miles from the harbour into the Atlantic.

The pirates board the vessels, usually at night, and steal everything from radar equipment to sailors' personal belongings. In several cases pirates have entered a captain's cabin and tried to break into the ship safe. They sell the bulk of the loot on the streets locally.

Albert Smith, traffic manager of the state-owned Guyana National Engineering Corporation, which does a lot of shipping, says the pirates board the ships using rods with hooks attached to pull themselves up onto the bow. At least two have been killed in the last five years, shot by guards. There have been no reports of injured sailors and the pirates apparently never attempt to take over the ships.

Most of the security measures taken by importers and ship owners have failed, including hiring security firms to protect vessels in the harbour. The port is vulnerable to piracy because Guyana's marine police do not have enough vessels and its coastguard is more concerned with drug trafficking and illegal fishing. ■

Bert Wilkinson A/P



LOOMIS DEAN / CAMERA PRESS

The Rose of Morocco

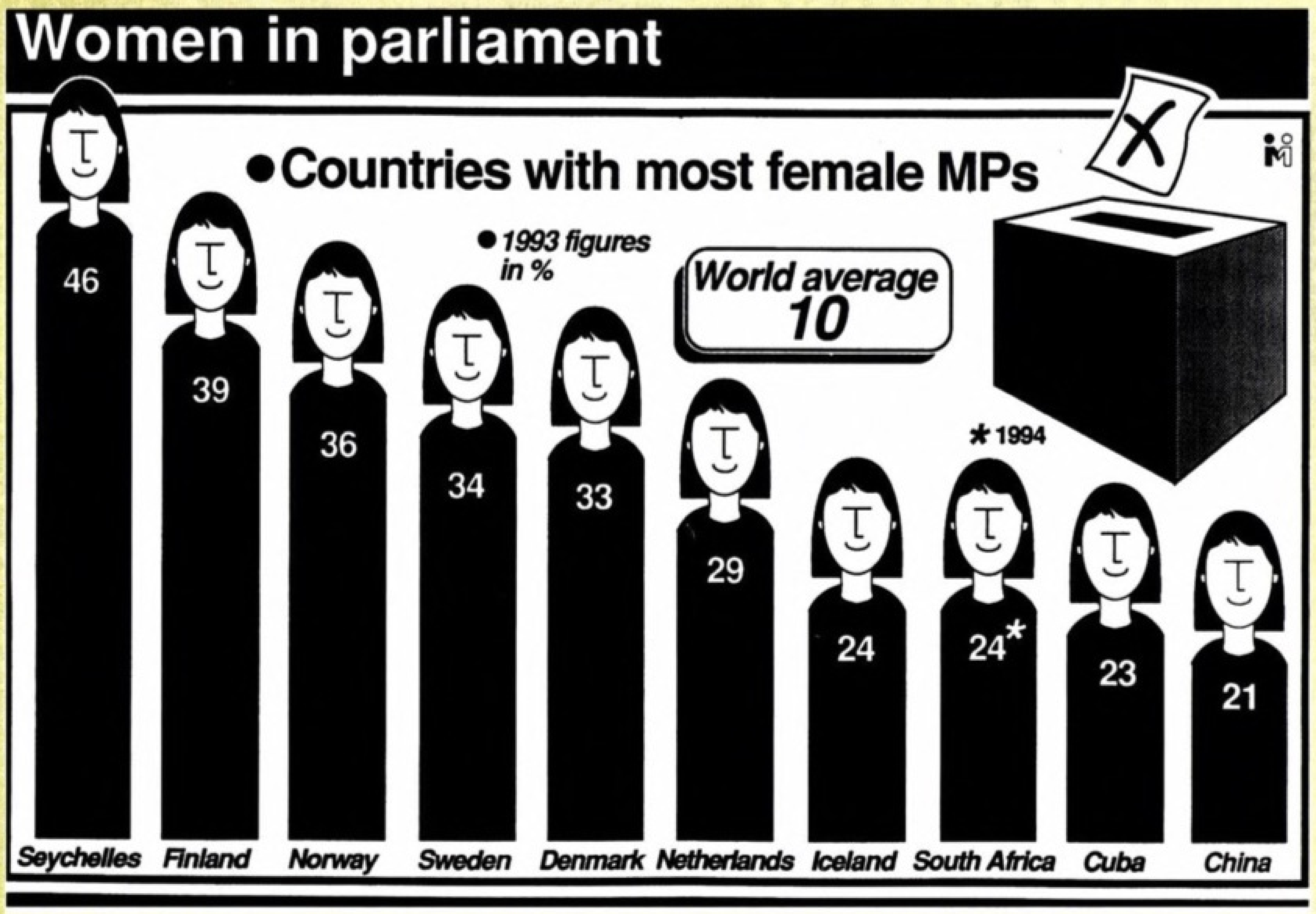
Orna and Yossi Yishi have won a nationwide contest in Morocco to select the most beautiful rose grown in the country. The surprising thing is that they are from Israel, a country with which Morocco is still technically at war. However the farming technology crossover from Israel to Morocco is not so surprising – Israeli farmers have battled with similar arid conditions as the Moroccans and have evolved seeds which produce crops geared to the export market. Farmers in Morocco are exempt from paying taxes which has actually led to some Israeli advisors setting up shop in the country. Does this mean that there is in reality peace between the two countries? 'Not peace – just a pleasant atmosphere,' according to Moroccan Tourism Minister Serge Bardago.

Barry Chamish/Gemini

Gender sensitivity

Almost a quarter of the 400 parliamentarians in South Africa's new National Assembly are women – a higher proportion than in the UK or the US. There are equality clauses in the new Constitution and in the country's first Bill of Rights. Politicians from Mandela down routinely stress the need for 'gender sensitivity' and every promise to end racism includes a pledge of non-sexism as well. Despite significant legislative changes and programmes aimed at improving the economic and social position of women, especially in the rural areas, the inner sanctum of political power is still elusive. There are only two women in the 27-strong Cabinet.

Arlene Getz/Gemini



UNICEF

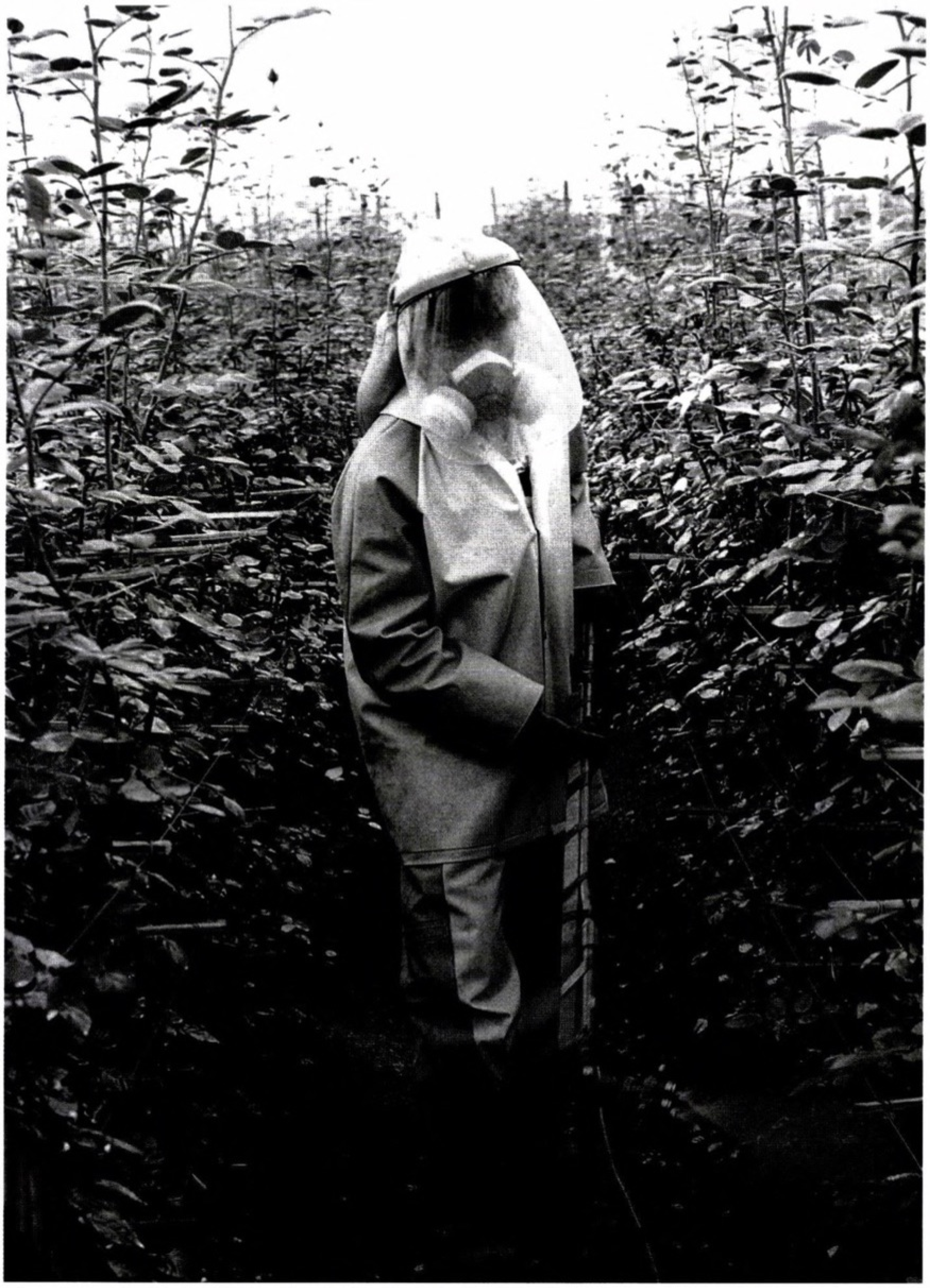
Capital radio

Since last year the BBC Marshall Plan of the Mind (MPM) has been making programmes for Radio Russia which explain to baffled Russians how to live in the world of democratic capitalism. One series explains how to run a business, another talks about how a free market is supposed to work, describing privatization, bankruptcy and that essential of the new Russian economy, inflation. With three-and-a-half hours of broadcasting time a week 'How Business Works' is attracting huge audiences of 5.5 million people.

The Economist, Vol 332, No 7872

NIKOLAI IGNATIEV / NETWORK

FAIR TRADE



TIM ROSS / JB PICTURES

The perfect look: toxic treatment for the world's second largest flower industry.

Blighting blooms

Pesticides poison Colombian workers

'IT'S a contradiction,' says the doctor sombrely. 'Work is meant to embrace your well-being. But here the more people work the worse their health gets. The future looks bleak for these women.'

Dr Emilio Reyes (names have been changed to protect anonymity) stands outside the small regional hospital where he has practised for the past five years. He has seen all the illnesses the area has to offer, particularly those of its main employer, the flower industry. In the background a woman arrives, helped to the hospital door by two colleagues. She is trembling, unable to speak clearly, her face very pale.

The doctor says she is one of up to five a day who arrive acutely poisoned at work. Pesticide poisoning: this is the price, for some workers, of Colombia's flower industry, the second largest in the world and the second largest exporter of flowers to the UK after Holland.

In the plastic-sheeted greenhouses which line the broad, fertile plains of Bogotá's savannah, dozens of pesticides – some of them banned in Europe and the US – are routinely sprayed to give the flowers the perfect look they need for European or US markets.

Some of the larger, more modern companies do claim to protect their workers. But, according to the women who do most of the work, poverty wages, pesticide poisoning, chronic and severe health problems are faced by the majority of Colombia's 70,000 flower workers.

Flower companies are present in 25 out of 27 of the main municipalities in the savannah plains and are major job creators and contributors to local taxes. But a single large company may consume as much water as a community of 20,000 people and the level of the water table has fallen sharply. Pesticides also pollute water supplies and contaminate milk and meat. Wages average $30 a week and one estimate suggests some 300 children are illegally employed in the industry.

Campaigners outside Colombia are *not* calling for a boycott of the Colombian flower trade, since working women would be the first to suffer. But they are asking importers to buy only from responsible employers under a new verification system. The idea of a fairly-traded flower is being pioneered in Germany. ■

Sarah Stewart

For further details of the fairly-traded flower campaign contact Christian Aid, PO Box 100, London SE1 7RT

Pride and privacy

In Australia a Federal-Government-funded privacy-advice kit for school children is causing a furore. The kit, which advises students they can stop teachers searching their bags and lockers for drugs, has angered teachers and some politicians. On the one hand, the writers of the kit wonder if children are being persuaded to be unaware of their rights in case it encourages rebellious behaviour. On the other, teachers argue that their position of responsibility requires that they ensure that schools remain safe, even if this means inspecting lockers and bags.

Jeff Curran/Gemini

END

END Quote

Change is within the land, as if the Earth were pregnant, full of this new life, and the time has arrived to give birth.

Elda Broilo, Movement of Landless Rural Workers, Brazil.

Courtesy Anders Corr, Santa Cruz, California.

music

KHALED
N'SSI N'SSI

N'ssi N'ssi

by **Khaled** *(Mango/Island 697-124 012-2 CD)*

Given the ubiquity of rock music in the modern world, it's easy to lose sight of the fact that rock – and everything it signified – was once truly outrageous. Think of the effect Elvis ('the pelvis') had on the prudish 1950s or the Beatles' declaration that they were 'bigger than Jesus'. *Rai* singer Khaled has caused similar waves in his native Algeria. Muslim clerics took exception to lyrics which dwelt on women and wine, and a few injudicious statements about politics got Khaled press-ganged into the army and denied a passport.

Young Algerians had a different attitude. Khaled, who has made cassette albums by the dozen, was lauded as Algeria's answer to Michael Jackson and he became a pin-up. Last year his single ***Didi*** became the first Arabic record to feature in the French top ten. In Algeria, like anywhere else, popular music seems to have its greatest power in moments of transgression.

Rai today occupies an ambivalent position in Algeria. Nominally supported by the Government for its export potential it is nonetheless damned by the fundamentalists. *Rai* means 'opinion' in Arabic and because its origins lie in the bawdy songs sung by women around the port of Oran the opinions it proffers are felt to be generally rather delinquent.

Yet Khaled is not, in ordinary terms, a protest singer. His music – described by producer Don Was as 'quarter-tone funk' – combines traditional rhythms and instrumentation with synthesizers, accordions and saxophones. Some of the most seductive parts of **N'ssi** are provided by a swooping whirlwind of an Egyptian string section. Khaled himself delivers a guttural Arabic lyric that weaves about with a defiant grandeur. The overall impression is of imperative intensity.

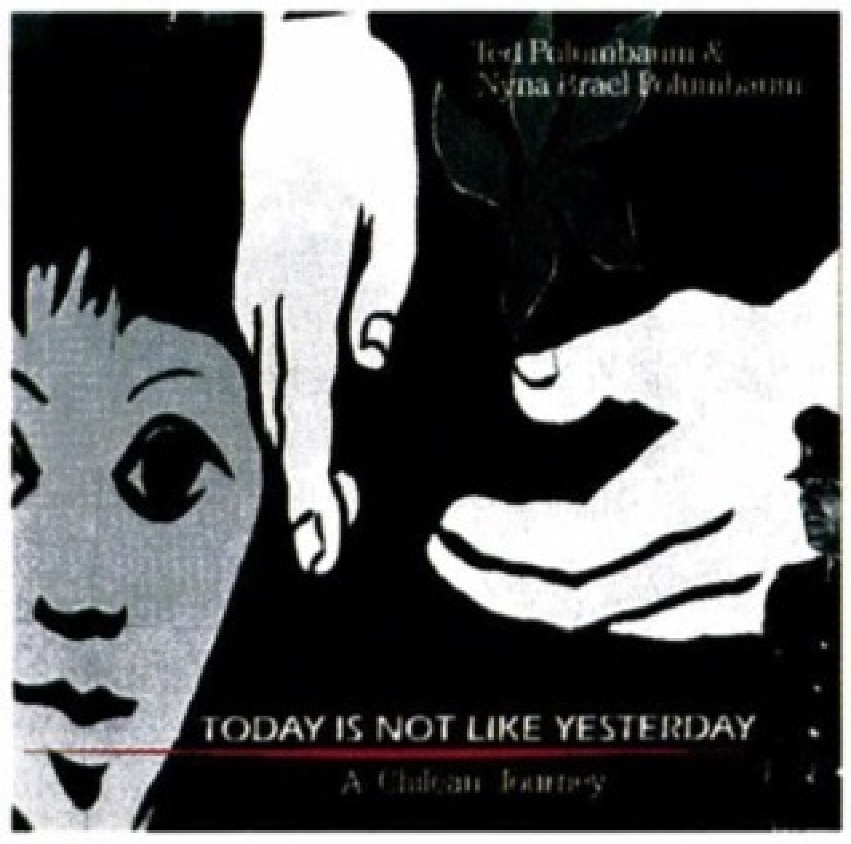
When first released in France – where Khaled now lives in exile – at the end of 1993, **N'ssi** shot to the top of the European 'world music' charts. This is an intoxicating album which will appeal to anyone with a youthful ear for rebellion and the feet for a good dance.

Politics ☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆☆☆

books

Today is not like yesterday: A Chilean journey

by **Ted Polumbaum** and **Nyna Brael Polumbaum** *(Light & Shadow, Cambridge, Massachusetts, ISBN 0-9633526-0-1)*



What makes this book so compelling is the way striking portrait photographs from the early 1970s in Chile have been used by the Polumbaums to trace the same people 20 years on. This gives the book an integrity of purpose that fixes you with a truthful and sometimes unsettling gaze.

A gentle portrait of the poet Ramón Riquelme, taken by the Polumbaums in 1972, was also used by the secret police to track him down after the military coup in 1973. The title of the book comes from a line of Riquelme's poetry, written in prison.

Carmen Jarpa has this to say of her former *compañeros* after her partner 'Mickey' went into hiding and was eventually shot: 'During all the time I was alone, not a single one of them came to see me, not even to leave me a piece of bread. Now that things are changing they justify their not coming around by saying they were afraid. They are hypocrites who turned their backs on me.'

Like 'Mickey', Oscar Garretón had his picture posted by the military junta on the front page of *El Mercurio* – Chile's establishment newspaper – shortly after the coup, under the banner headline: 'FIND AND DETAIN'. Oscar now runs the Santiago Metro but is still on parole and has to report to prison once a month. 'A bit of surrealism,' is how he sees it.

Oscar Ibañez used to be a prominent union leader and has been relentlessly hounded for 20 years as a result. But he has dispensed with bitterness. 'The dictatorship is going away,' he says. 'Now it's like we're still in a box, but the box is gradually getting bigger and there is more space.'

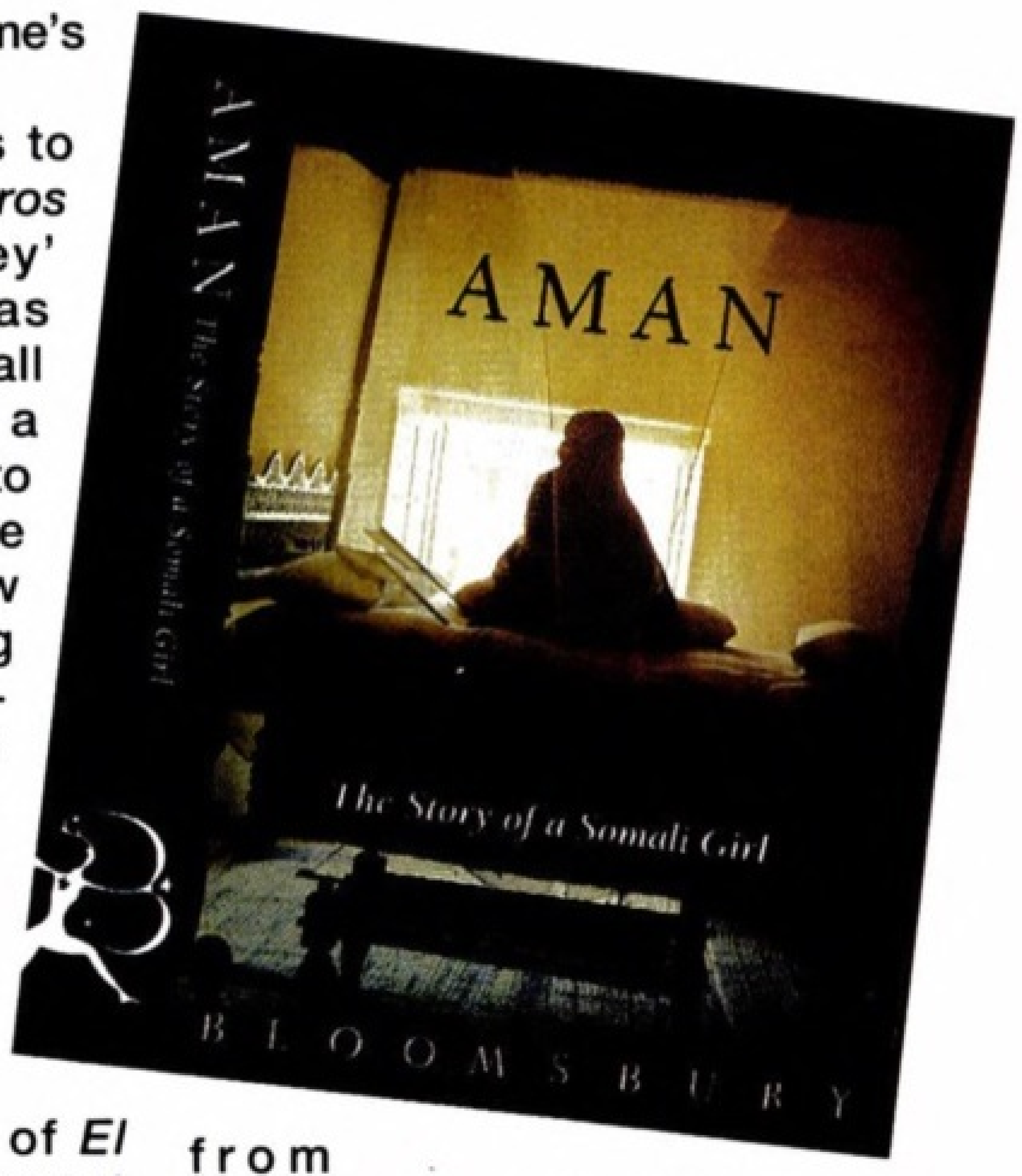
Most of the people the Polumbaums have traced were committed to radical change in 1973 and so have suffered terribly. 'Chile' is supposed, however, to have prospered from repression and free trade. Does this mean that material prosperity relies on suffering and repression? Few of us would wish to believe so, but **Today is not like yesterday** makes you wonder.

A sense of the photograph as evidence runs through this wonderful book. Out of the lucid text and the brilliant, affectionate images an extraordinarily powerful human story escapes. Perplexing, sad, inspiring and shocking as it is, don't miss this chance to discover what photojournalism can still do.

Politics ☆☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆☆☆

Aman
The story of a Somali girl

by **Aman** as told to **Virginia Lee Barnes** and **Janice Boddy** *(Bloomsbury, London, ISBN 0-7475-1761-4)*



Do not be deceived by the dust-jacket of this book. It appears to be selling the veiled mystery of Somali girlhood, of static enclosure. This could not be further from the dynamic spirit of this story – and its narrator.

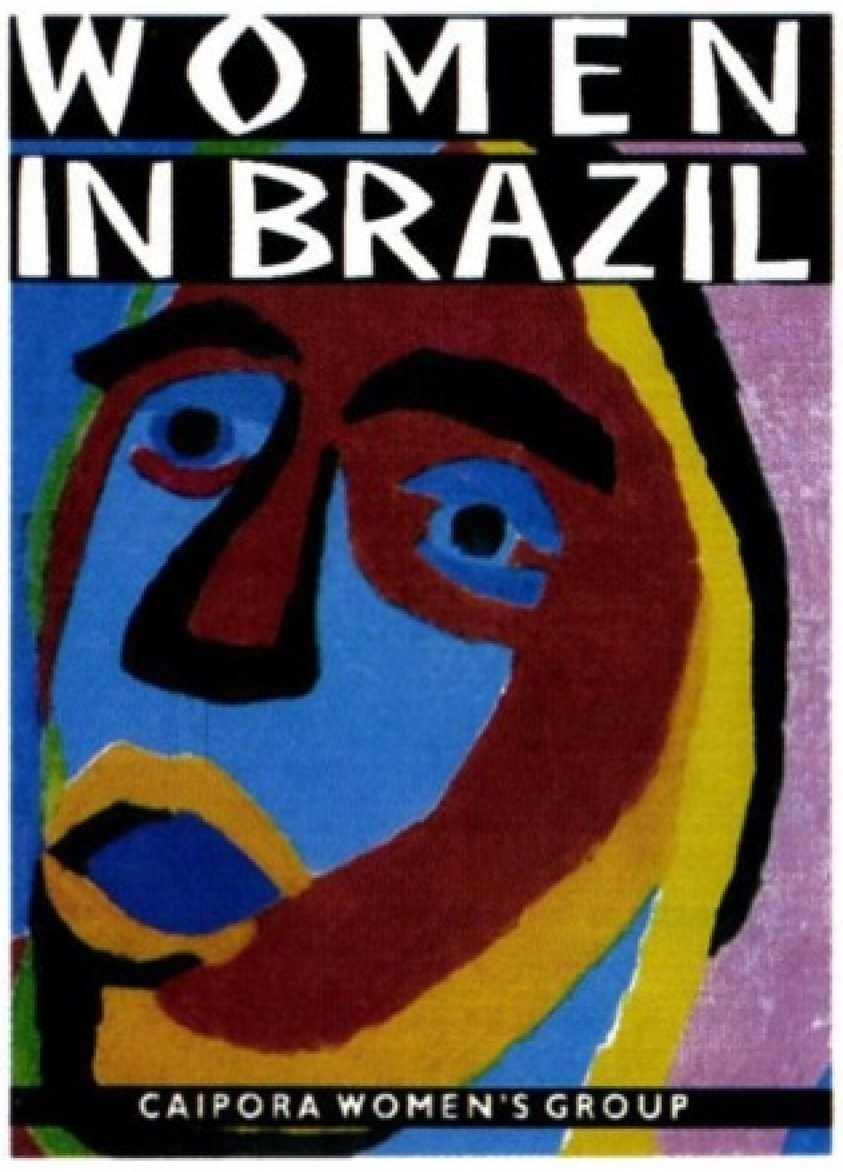
Born in 1953 Aman tells the story of her life up to the age of 17. It is an extraordinary tale, which also sheds light on Somalia and the dramatic changes it has undergone in this century. From goat-tending nomadic toddler, to 13-year-old runaway wife, to city-dwelling quasi-prostitute, Aman takes us through a picaresque life that includes murder, imprisonment, decadent parties, a military coup, exile – the lot.

Coming from a vigorous oral tradition (Somalia has had a standard written language for barely 20 years) she knows how to tell a rattling good story. Her rhythms, inflections and humorous asides (recorded by anthropologists Barnes and Boddy) reveal a true entertainer's love for language. But what makes her narrative so compelling is her candour. Every now and again she says: 'I'm telling the whole story' and she certainly seems to be, whether or not it presents her in a good light. Everything gets described in detail – even the circumcision and infibulation she underwent at the age of nine. The pride and honour that she attaches to such a painful and mutilating custom (still practised on the majority of Somali girls) may baffle us – but Aman's story somehow manages to make her acceptance of it understandable.

As a Somali girl, Aman was abused by patriarchy and colonization in equal measure – but what comes through her story is her pluckiness, her wit and her vitality. She's a tough kid, a skinny little rebel who runs fast and has a nomad's independence of spirit. But she also has a tremendous loyalty towards her mother – who herself has fought tooth and nail both to keep her own independence and to keep custody of Aman as a child. And that is the central and persistent love story of this book.

Anthropologists Boddy and Barnes have done splendidly in recognizing the value of Aman's narration, in capturing her voice and providing an introduction and conclusion that is sensitive and illuminating. This is anthropology at its best.

Politics ☆☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆☆☆



Women in Brazil

by **Caipora Women's Group** *(Latin America Bureau, ISBN 0-906156-79-3)*

I am cheaper

Muchacha....

I am the washing machine
which the Señor won't buy
as long as I wash cheaper and
save the Señora
time
and her hands
rough skin;

I am the vacuum cleaner
which the Señora doesn't need
the car wash,
the nursery school
the laundry,
the sick ward,
the shopping trolley;

I am Señora's
emancipation,
the button,
which fulfils every wish – just
press me;

I am cheaper...

Politics ☆☆☆☆
Entertainment ☆☆☆

STAR RATING

Excellent	☆☆☆☆☆
Very good	☆☆☆☆
Good	☆☆☆
Fair	☆☆
Poor	☆

Reviews editor: **Vanessa Baird**

THE *classic*

Kes

...being the film that put the drama of a working-class childhood on the big screen.

ADULTS forget most of the difficulties involved in being a child. This is probably simple self-preservation. George Orwell, in a memorable essay on his schooldays, spoke of 'a deeper grief which is peculiar to childhood and not easy to convey: a sense of desolate loneliness and helplessness, of being locked up not only in a hostile world but in a world of good and evil where the rules are such that it was not actually possible for me to keep them...' This was the great abiding lesson of my childhood: that I was in a world where it was not possible for me to 'be good'. I grew up on a council estate in the North East of England in the 1960s and I was aware that the details of my immediate surroundings – the people and places I knew and their concerns and problems – were absent from the media. It was an invisible and, by implication, a sub-standard world.

The first film I saw which broke through this crust of neglect was Ken Loach's **Kes**, a work which told me that my everyday world could be the stuff of drama. There was tragedy, comedy and human interest in our own lives equal to the glitzy images projected through TV and films.

Kes – scripted by Barry Hines from his book - is set in Barnsley, a Yorkshire mining town. It concerns a few weeks in the life of Billy Casper (a wonderfully natural performance by David Bradley), about to leave school and embark on an uncertain and unpromising adult life. Billy lives with his downtrodden mother and boorish half-brother. Bullied at school and universally regarded as dim and feckless, Billy keeps a beautiful untamed kestrel, lavishing on the bird all the love and tenderness that was neither expected nor offered within the bounds of his family. The bird is the only thing in his life to which he is not a marginal and despised failure. It is significant that in medieval times the kestrel was the only hunting bird that the lowest social orders were allowed to possess.

Befriended by a teacher (played by Colin Welland), Billy is encouraged to pass on his enthusiasm to his classmates. Asked for the first time in his life to speak on what he knows intimately, his inarticulacy disappears and he becomes, for a few brief moments, a fluent and informed communicator. In command of his subject, Billy demonstrates that care of the bird is his 'fix' on the world, his method of grasping and, to a limited extent, manipulating a society in which it was not possible for him to 'be good'. His talk also demonstrates the extent to which society, by asking the wrong questions and testing inappropriate skills, has squandered his potential and actively hindered his development.

Retribution for Billy's moment of control is brutal and swift; Kes is killed by his half-brother, furious that Billy had lost him money by forgetting to place a bet at the bookmakers. The hope and yearning in Billy's comfortless life is snuffed out in a single mean and vengeful act. Loach, a committed libertarian socialist, developed collaborative working methods with a regular crew and – by necessity – a small budget. His use of improvised dialogue and preference for amateur actors give his films a gritty documentary feel and contribute to his aim of demystifying and democratizing the process of film-making. Over the years his work has suffered from censorship, particularly his 1980s features on the UK miners' strike and trade union leaders. Only relatively recently, with *Riff Raff, Raining Stones* and *Ladybird, Ladybird* has he gained the success and recognition he deserves.

Like much of Loach's work, **Kes** presents an overwhelmingly bleak picture of working-class life and if I have a reservation it is that his approach could so easily reinforce the stereotype of the dour, humourless northerner. Loach avoids this trap by virtue of his passionate commitment to his characters and his belief in their capacity to struggle against their circumstances. His accurate portrayal of the way drudgery and debt impoverish the spirit as well as the body underlines rather than negates the message that alternatives do exist, often in the most unlikely places. There is no room for sentimentality or happy ending in Billy Casper's story but the very act of telling opened windows on hidden lives and helped redress a very skewed balance in cinema's representation of ordinary people.

Ken Loach's films illustrate the truth of the dictum 'pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will'. He said recently: 'You shouldn't exaggerate what you can do, because you really cannot do much at all. Film is plainly so very transient. I am not optimistic at all in the short or medium term... but people's capacity to fight back is inexhaustible. The tide will turn sooner or later... I'm optimistic about that.' ■

Peter Whittaker

***Kes**, directed by **Ken Loach** (1969), is based on the book* A Kestrel for a Knave *by Barry Hines, published by Michael Joseph 1968/ Penguin 1969.*

Q? UESTIONS

...that have always intrigued you about the world will appear in this, your section, and be answered by other readers. Please address your answers and questions to 'Curiosities'.

Which country in the world was under colonial rule for the longest time?

● I don't know about 'in the world' but the country under 'British' colonial rule for the longest time is obviously Wales. Since 1278 the English monarch has installed its own 'Prince of Wales' and since the 1960s the Government has imposed a 'Secretary of State for Wales' – the current one being English.

Anthony Hill
Maesteg, Wales, UK

RONALD THOMPSON / CAMERA PRESS

Bastion of colonialism: Harlech Castle.

Is there a symbolic meaning to the old Bee Gees song *I started a joke*?

● As an old Bee Gees fan (I'm 44) I recall that when *I started a joke* was popular in 1969 the word was it dealt with Jesus Christ. Lines such as 'then I finally died, which started the whole world living', suggest the Christian sacrifice to save humankind. But when the lyrics go on to say: 'if only I had seen that the joke was on me' I am not sure to what extent the suggestion is that Jesus was being ripped off. Only the songwriter can answer that.

Steve Faraher-Amidon
White Rock, Canada

What did WB Yeats mean by the 'filthy modern tide'?

● I think the answer given by Terry Eccles in **NI 257** is somewhat misleading. Although a 'world class' poet, Yeats was, like his contemporaries DH Lawrence, Ezra Pound, Roy Fuller and Hugh MacDiarmid, a romantic fascist. 'The filthy modern tide' he hated so much was the mass, commercial, pluralist, democratic society which for better or for worse our age has inherited. His response to it was to dream up a never-never Ireland of past and future; a noble society of free aristocrats, pursuing heroic ends (see *Irish Airman)* and a subservient peasantry of 'worthies' and 'characters'. Comparisons could be drawn indeed between Yeats' 'Ireland' and Hitler and his 'Germany' – the poet had ideas of Irish 'Blue Shirts'. His dreams never got beyond poetry, while Hitler's unfortunately did. 'Visceral creative rage' is not necessarily a good thing. As the poet himself said: 'The worst are full of passionate intensity'.

GR Stirrart
Armadale, Scotland, UK

AWAITING YOUR ANSWERS

Can anyone tell me if there are any environmental organizations which take direct action of a militant nature against those responsible for destruction of the rainforest in South and Central America and in South East Asia?

S Davies
London, UK

How, where and when did the tradition of female circumcision (or genital mutilation) originate?

Tariq M M Antar
Khartoum, Sudan

Six million is the figure commonly given for the number of people killed in the Nazi Holocaust. Has anyone got a more precise figure?

Jamie Janson
Watlington, UK

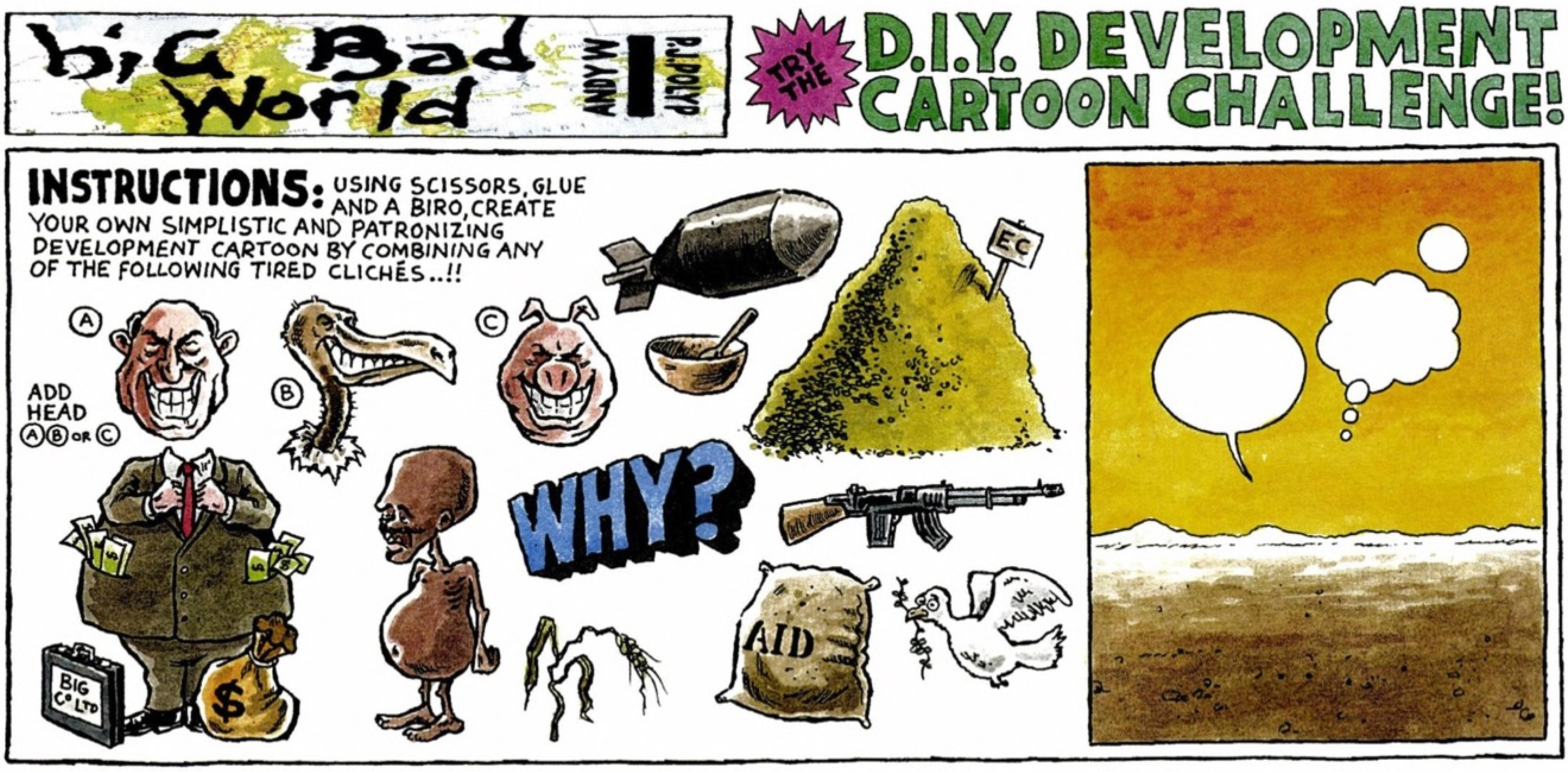
Which, if any, of the commercial banks has cancelled its Third World debts – particularly in regard to sub-Saharan Africa?

Liza Sandell
Suva, Fiji

Who actually thought up the term 'political correctness'?

Tamara Torobin
Gloucester, Canada

If you have any questions or answers please send them to Curiosities, **New Internationalist, 55 Rectory Road, Oxford OX4 1BW, UK,** or to your local **NI** office (see inside front cover for addresses).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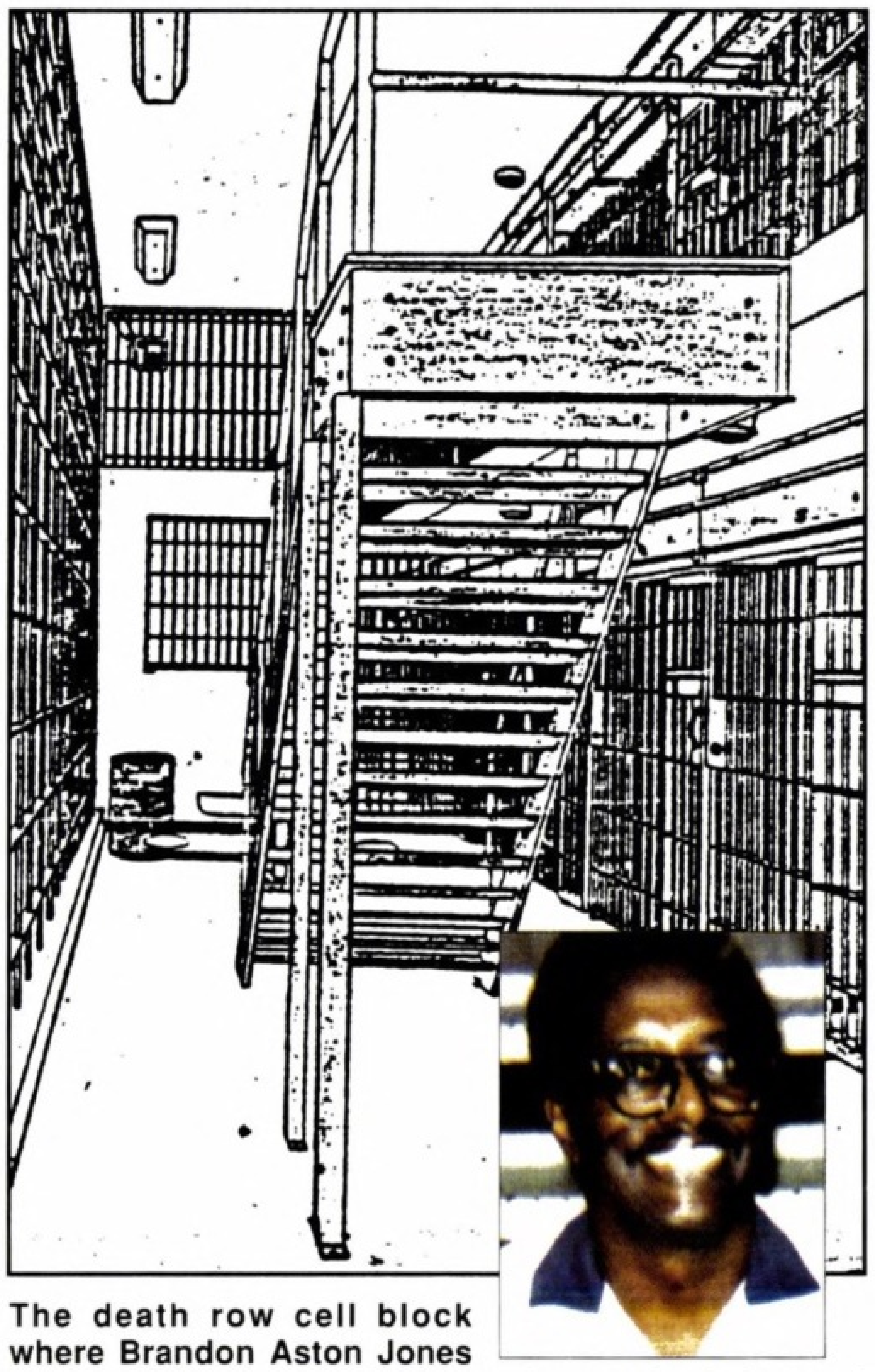
Taking a photo

*A simple request spirals out of control. Death row prisoner **Brandon Aston Jones** concludes his moving insight into the violence of prison.*

ALL prisons have a program whereby a prisoner can have photographs taken on request for their own personal use. The price varies from prison to prison but usually the cost for one photograph is between one and five dollars.

Several years ago my mother wrote to me. She begged me for a photograph. She knew she was near death and she had not seen me in years. I will never forget the words in that letter. She wrote: 'It's more than a thousand miles between us son, and I cannot travel because I'm too weak; I just want to see your face one more time before I die.'



The death row cell block where Brandon Aston Jones lives and waits. His cell, No 51, is upstairs in front of the round light in the ceiling. The man who made this drawing – Christopher Burger – was executed earlier this year. Inset: Brandon Aston Jones.

It usually takes about three days to get a photo taken. I explained to the so-called 'prison counsellor' Mr Roquemore the urgency of my need and he seemed to appreciate how important it was for me. I did all the necessary paper work, filled in the 'money withdrawal request' for two photographs. He even said he would take the photo of me personally as soon as 'inmate accounts' cleared the money transfer from my account into the prisoners' 'Picture Project' account.

A week went by. I watched the counsellor passing in and out of my cell block each day. During that week he often looked at me directly in the eye without so much as a vague mention of my request. His lack of action prompted me to write a letter to the warden repeating my request, outlining my conversation with Mr Roquemore and noting his lack of action.

A week went by with no response from the warden. Then I chanced upon the so-called 'prison minister' in the hallway and explained to him the situation. He said he would look into the matter, adding he did not understand the delay. Then I explained the sequence of events to the unit supervisor who told me he would get to the bottom of the matter and get back to me.

Nine more days went by – with no response from any of these people. All the while it was clear to me that everyone – even the cell-block officers – knew about my problem.

After 28 days with no response at all, I asked cell block officer Wicks if he would call his supervisor so I could speak to him about a personal matter. Officer Wicks just sat smugly in his booth with a contemptuous smirk on his face and flatly refused. When I asked him 'why not?' he became abusive.

In a fit of combined rage and despair I walked across to the table that sits in the middle of the cell block, picked up the old Underwood typewriter that sat on it and hurled it through the cell-block window. I figured that this action would bring a sergeant. Part of the typewriter bounced back inside the cell block after hitting a concrete mesh just two feet beyond the window opening. My rage was such that I picked up those pieces and threw them out as well, totally unaware that I had severely cut my hand in the process. Officer Wicks ordered all the prisoners to go to their cells. I followed his order just like everybody else, in the hope I would see the supervisor about my problem.

Moments later the supervising sergeant, the unit supervisor, the counsellor Roquemore and someone I did not know from the warden's office, were all gathered in front of my cell. Suddenly I was getting lots of attention! Roquemore looked me in the eye with the contrived piety of a priest and said: 'What's the problem?' The absurdity of that question was rivalled only by the fact that the man from the wardens' office was standing behind the counsellor with a camera in his hand. He began talking photographs of the broken window, of what was left of the typewriter that had bounced back into the cell block in several twisted pieces.

No, he did not take a photograph of me. Yes, I did get charged with destroying state property, and yes I was punished for it. I was guilty – they had the photographs from the scene of the crime to prove it!

Shortly afterwards I learned that my mother had died four days prior to the incident.

If anyone thinks that this kind of treatment is conducive to helping a prisoner rehabilitate himself or herself they are sadly mistaken. Furthermore, the kind of thing I have described is not exceptional – it's the rule. We should not be surprised that prisoners who have been subjected to such inhumane treatment for 10, 15, 20 years should, upon release, turn out to be walking time-bombs.

As a prisoner you live in an atmosphere of violence so pervasive that you have to be prepared to defend yourself at every moment against the assaults of fellow prisoners and equally violent 'corrections staff'.

It occurs to me that society recognizes that a soldier needs special psychological attention when she or he returns from the battle field abroad. Yet prisons in America are little more than contained battle fields on domestic soil. Just about every prisoner in them is emotionally or psychologically a victim – of one kind or another – of 'prison administrative shell shock'. ■

***Brandon Aston Jones** welcomes letters. His address is GDCC, G2-51 EF 122216, PO Box 3877 Jackson, GA 30233, USA.*

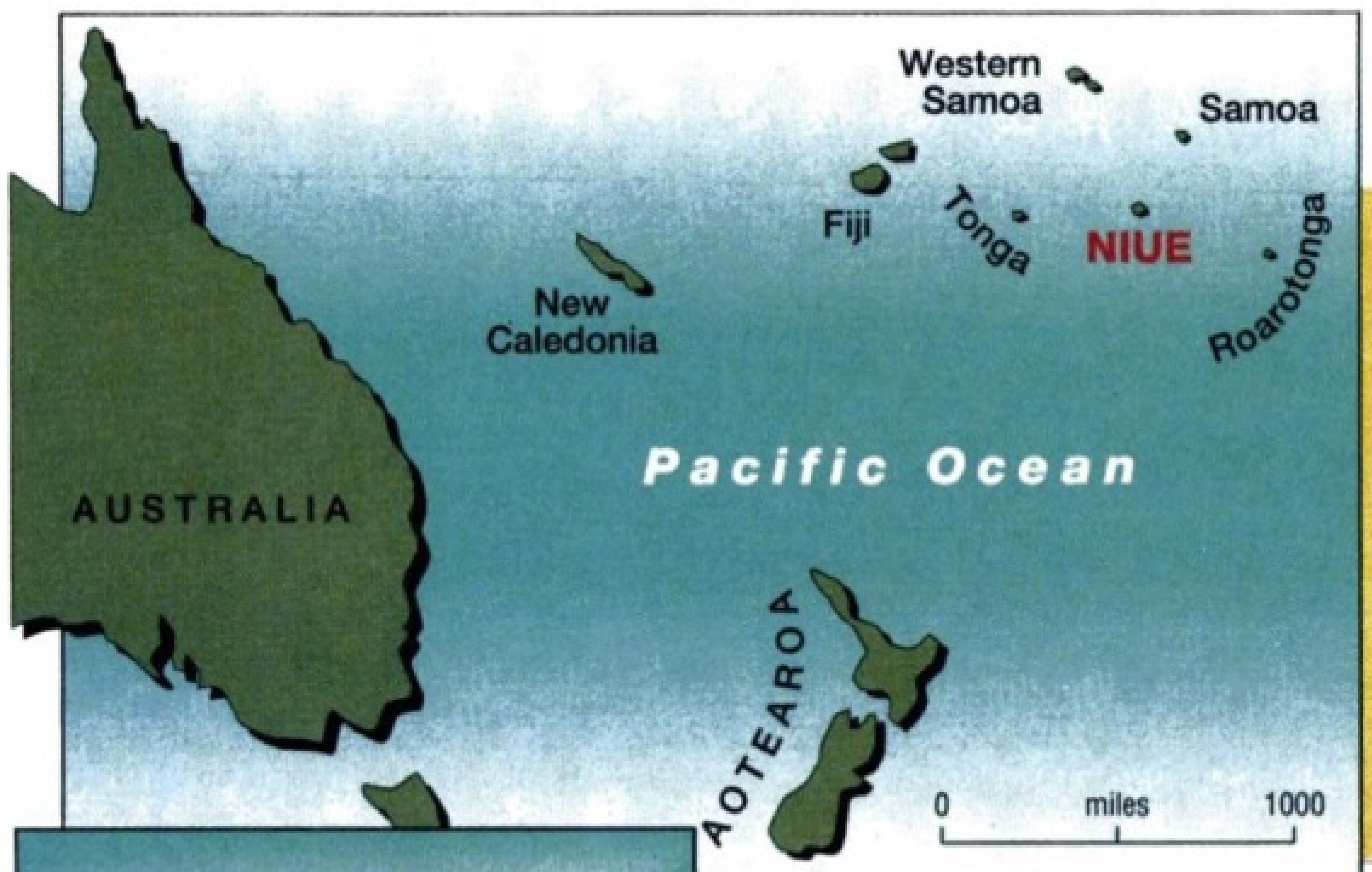
Niue

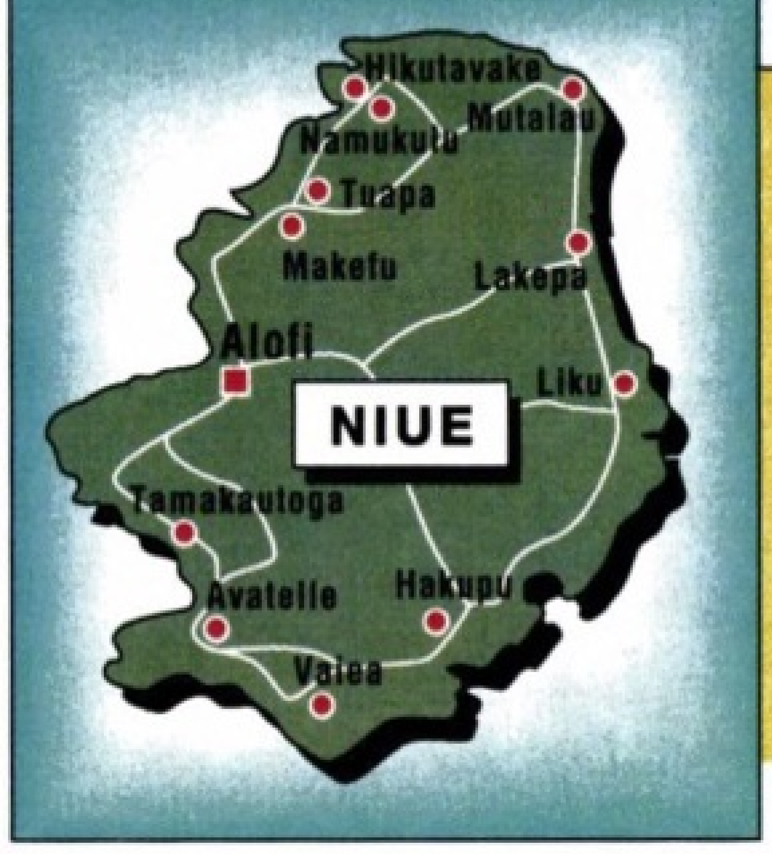
NIUE (pronounced 'New-ay') can claim fame for being the largest and the smallest. It is the largest uplifted coral atoll in the world with an area of 259 square kilometre – and one of the smallest microstates in the world. More Niueans live in Aotearoa/New Zealand than on the atoll itself.

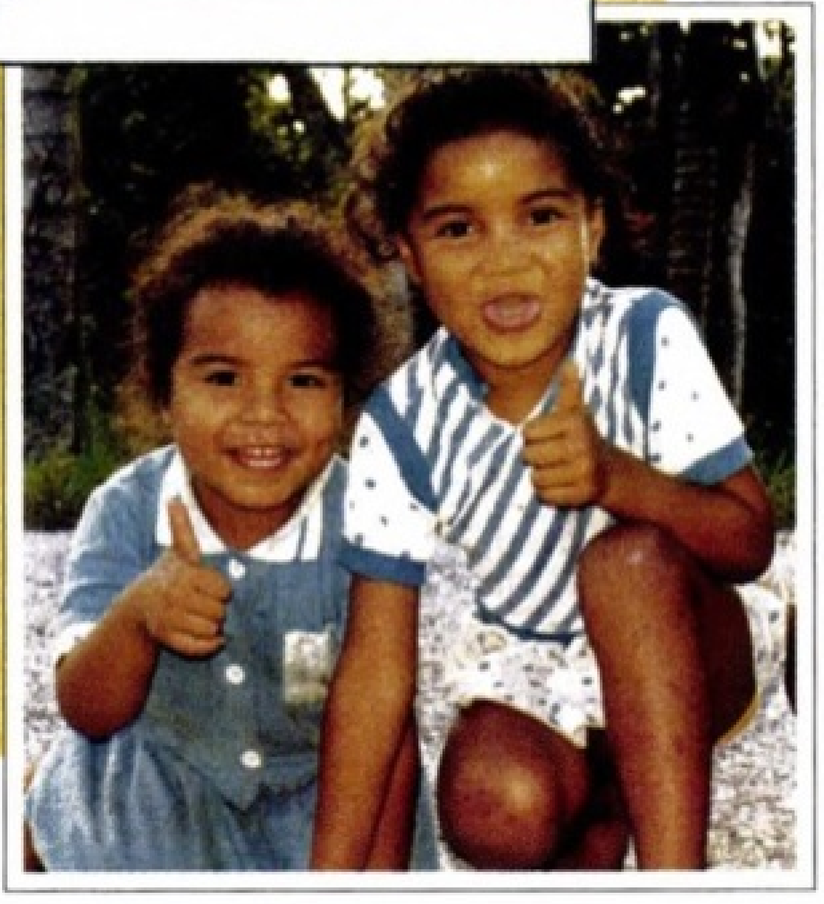
In 1899 the King of Niue requested a British representative to preside over the Niuean Government. The British soon passed this representation to New Zealand who administered the island from 1901 until 1974 when Niue became self-governing. Aotearoa/New Zealand retains constitutional responsibilities for defence and foreign affairs. All Niueans hold New Zealand citizenship.

The Westminster-style parliament comprises a representative from each of the fourteen villages on the island, plus six others elected from a common roll. A Premier is selected from the twenty members, and in turn the premier chooses a cabinet of three.

The Niuean economy is virtually dependent upon aid from Aotearoa and remittances from Niueans living abroad. Economic self-sufficiency is currently unviable due to various constraints. Attempts to stimulate the agricultural sector have been frustrated by environmental factors. The rocky nature of the terrain and the lack of running streams leaves a shortage of fertile soil. Weather conditions are unpredictable – the hurricanes of 1959 and 1960 devastated the island.







NIUE TOURISM OFFICE

Cash crops like coconut, passion fruit, copra and honey all followed the trend of a boom-and-bust cycle, but attempts are being made to revive the once profitable lime industry.

Outward migration has been a big drain on Niue's workforce and with 80 per cent of the population employed by the Government, there is little surplus labour for agricultural production. However the government workforce has been heavily reduced recently in order to encourage workers to develop private sector activities.

Primary school is free and grants enable students to travel to Aotearoa for secondary and tertiary education. Most healthcare is also free and aid is available to transfer critically ill patients to Aotearoa for treatment.

The majority of trading to and from Niue is with Aotearoa, with freight carried by sea, but imports heavily outweigh exports. In the year ending December 1993, exports amounted to NZ$420,000 (US$252,000) whilst imports to Niue totalled NZ$3.52 million (US$2.1).

The new Premier, Frank Lui, is keen to put Niue on the international tourist map. Adventure holidays and eco-tourism are seen as the mainspring of future economic development. And with its hundreds of caves, crevices and chasms, and excellent diving, the coral island of Niue is attractive.

But for the present the dilemma of depopulation and total aid dependence still pervades the life of the Niuean people. ■

Orly Jacobson

AT A glance

Excellent ★★★★★
Good ★★★★
Fair ★★★
Poor ★★
Appalling ★

POLITICS
Slightly right of centre – democratic parliament, but influenced by politics in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

INCOME DISTRIBUTION ★★★
Cash economy small, but growing.

LITERACY ★★★★
Free schooling.

SELF-RELIANCE ★
Totally dependent on external aid and remittances.

FREEDOM ★★★★
Local and High courts in use.

POSITION OF WOMEN ★★★
Improving as educational opportunities expand.

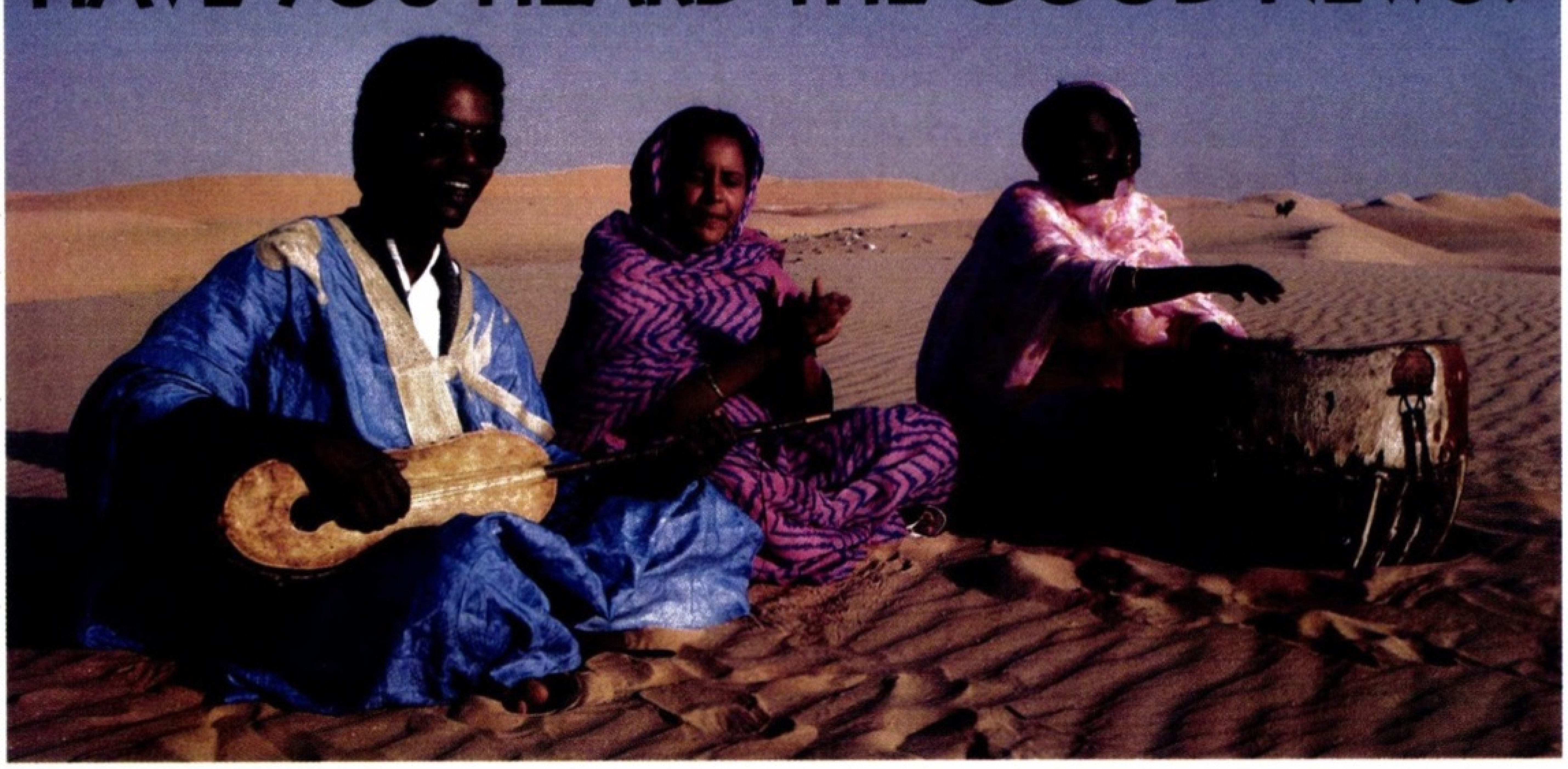
LIFE EXPECTANCY ★★★★★
71 years (for Polynesia).

(US 76 years)

Leader premier Frank Lui
Economy Aid averaging NZ$10 *(US$6)* million per annum until 1990, recently reduced to NZ$7 *(US$4.2)* million.
Monetary Unit: NZ dollar.
Main Imports: Domestic goods and merchandise, foodstuffs, machinery.
Main Exports: Taro (a starchy food-plant), handicrafts, limes.
The 11-12 per cent of total land considered cultivable is volcanic and fertile. Production constrained by poor terrain, porous soil, low water table and extremely fragmented holdings.
People 2,300 (on the island: 12,000 in Aotearoa/New Zealand)
Health Good, free health care.
Culture Polynesian. Niuean community structure based on the extended family system. The village is an independent unit and an integral part of social and political life.
Religion: Mainly Christian. Missionaries from London Missionary Society arrived in 1846 and began converting islanders from traditional Niuean religion. Peniamina day celebrates day Christianity came to the island.
Language: Official languages: English and Niuean. English spoken in business circles. otherwise the traditional Norfolk dialect (a mixture of old English and Tahitian).

Sources: *Asia and Pacific review 1993-4*

HAVE YOU HEARD THE GOOD NEWS?



Khalifa Ould Eide, Garmi Mint Abba, Fayrouz Mint Seymali/photo: Diana Stone

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Ideally the whole world would be at peace. Instead of agressive competition we would be enjoying friendly cooperation. Instead of the isolationism of self-interest, personally and nationally, we could have free-flowing association as between ourselves, our groups and our nations, with all that that implies. To realize these ideals should we not examine what prevents them: selfishness in all its forms, fear, bigotry, lack of generosity and above all almost total lack of appreciation of the importance of the spiritual nature of man. Spiritually and essentially all men really are brothers. Surely we ought seriously to try to realize that ideal.

For more information write to -

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COMING NEXT MONTH

Alive and Killing – The Arms Trade

The Cold War may be over but lies, secrets and hypocrisy are keeping the arms trade alive and killing. While mouthing concern about democracy, the governments of arms-selling countries have tyrants and human-rights abusers as their best clients. And while governments are plugging the line that arms exports are good business, they are plundering the public pocket to keep the industry going.

Next month's issue of the **NI** takes a look behind the lies – and claims your right to know what is going on in your name so that you can press for an end to this deadly trade.

POLITICS OF CHANGE

One Week or Weekend with Jonathon Porritt & Sara Parkin at Dartington Hall

If you are an activist, pressure group or simply involved in environmental issues, do you want a real opportunity to re-energise your ideas and efforts?

Details: Richard Wright, Dartington Hall, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 6EL Tel. 0803 862271

TEACHERS FOR VIETNAM. Qualified volunteers required for minimum of one year, to teach English. Board and accommodation provided. Apply: *Len Aldis, Sec Britain-Vietnam Friendship Society, Flat 2, 26 Tomlins Grove, London E3 4NX*

ENVIRONMENTAL WORK BRIGADES TO CARIBBEAN COAST OF NICARAGUA. 13 February - 15 March 1995. Volunteers needed to live and work alongside a black women's co-operative. Cost £1,300 inclusive. Details: *Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7 7QG. Tel: 071-272 9619.*

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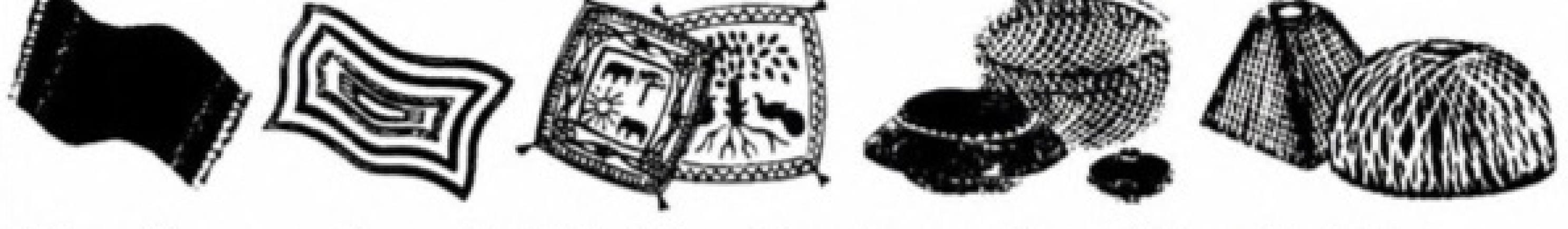

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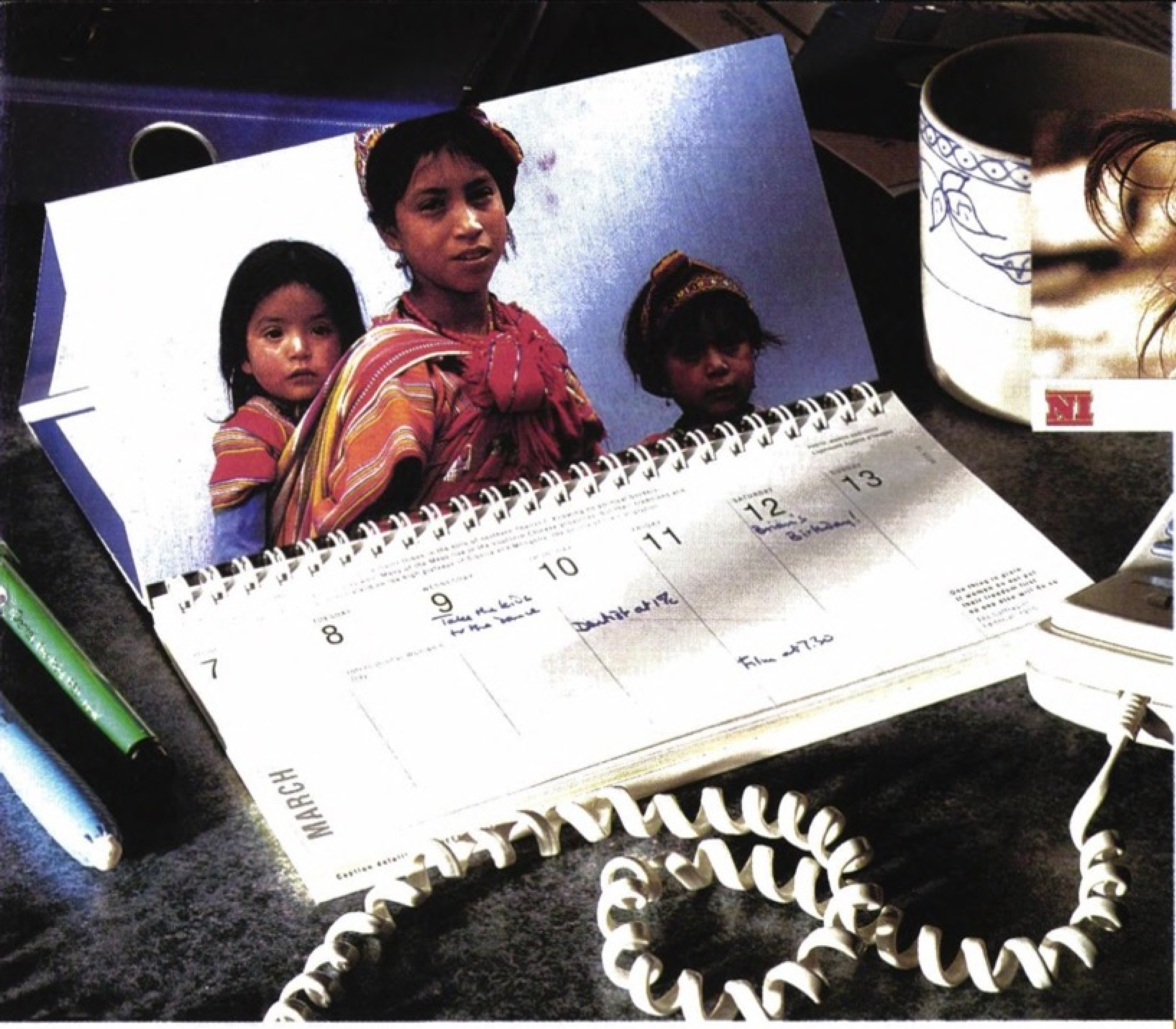
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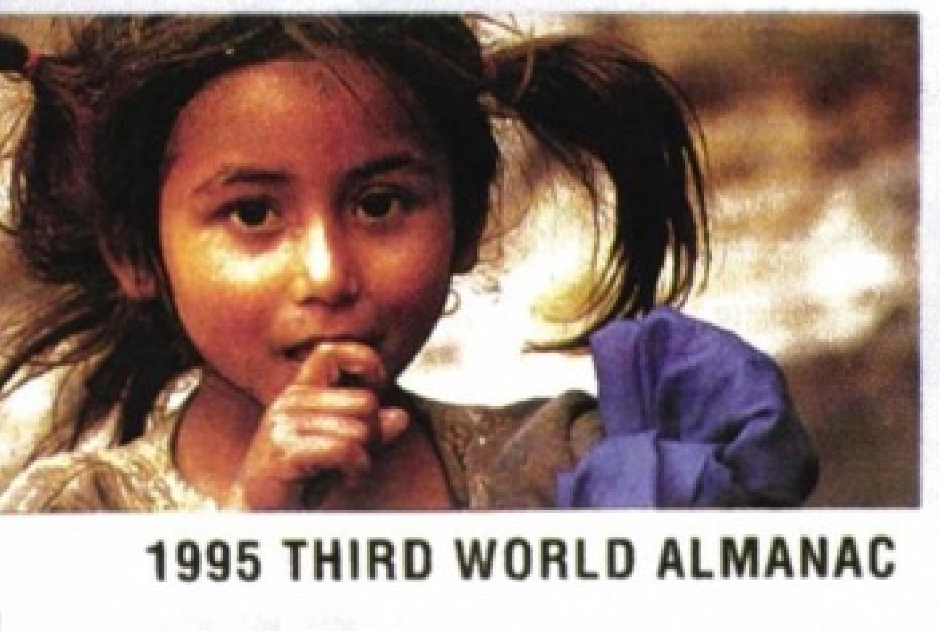
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1995 THIRD WORLD ALMANAC

Your table-top photo diary

Quirky, joyful, illuminating, sad: 52 full colour photos, one for every week of the year are found in this photo diary. The week-at-a-glance format gives plenty of space for listing appointments and the cover opens into a unique triangular presentation so that the pages can be propped up to view and use. Size? At 8¹/₄" x 4¹/₂" (21cms x 11cms) it is handy on the desktop or in a bag. Spiral binding ensures the almanac stays open and lies flat for writing. A practical, attractive and distinctive organiser.

Other features include:

• weekly quotation to inspire or provoke • useful UN statistics on the world's people • dates of festivals, religious holidays and anniversaries of the world's main religions • a fold-out personal budget planner • full colour up-to-date world map.

EVERY WEEK'S PHOTO IN FULL COLOUR

Ref: 01368 **UK £8.95 • Can/US $17.95**

THE WORLD IN YOUR KITCHEN

THE WORLD IN YOUR KITCHEN
VEGETARIAN RECIPES from Africa, Asia and Latin America for Western kitchens with country information and food facts
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TUNISIA
SIDE DISHES

Vegetarian recipes from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East for Western kitchens, with country information and food facts.

Taste the delights of world vegetarian cooking with the **New Internationalist**'s new food book – 150 recipes tested and adapted for you to cook easily at home. It's packed with exciting food ideas, many colour photos and fascinating facts.

More than a cook book:

• Over 25 full page colour photos • Intriguing food facts for each recipe • Attractive design and step-by-step cooking methods • Full nutrition guide • Vegetarianism set in the context of today's factory farm world • Glossary of ingredients • Hardback, ribbon marker. 176 pp

Over 40,000 copies sold in the first six months of publication! Measures 8¹/₄" x 8¹/₄" (21.5cms x 21.5cms).

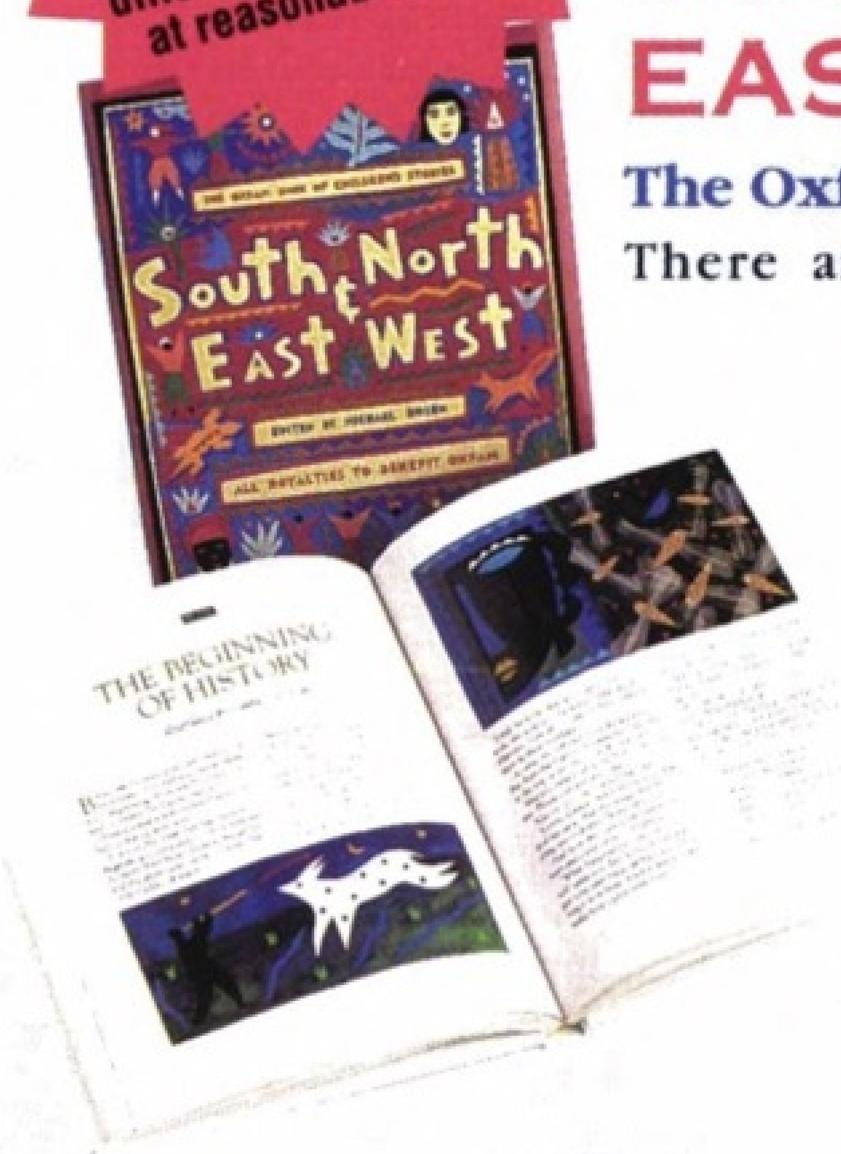
Ref: 01309 **UK £12.99 • Can/US $22.95**

Canadian edition in conjunction with Second Story Press

THINK OF YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFT LIST

New Internationalist publications make thoughtful, exciting and different Christmas gifts at reasonable prices.

SOUTH AND NORTH, EAST AND WEST


South North East West
THE BEGINNING OF HISTORY

The Oxfam Book of Children's Stories

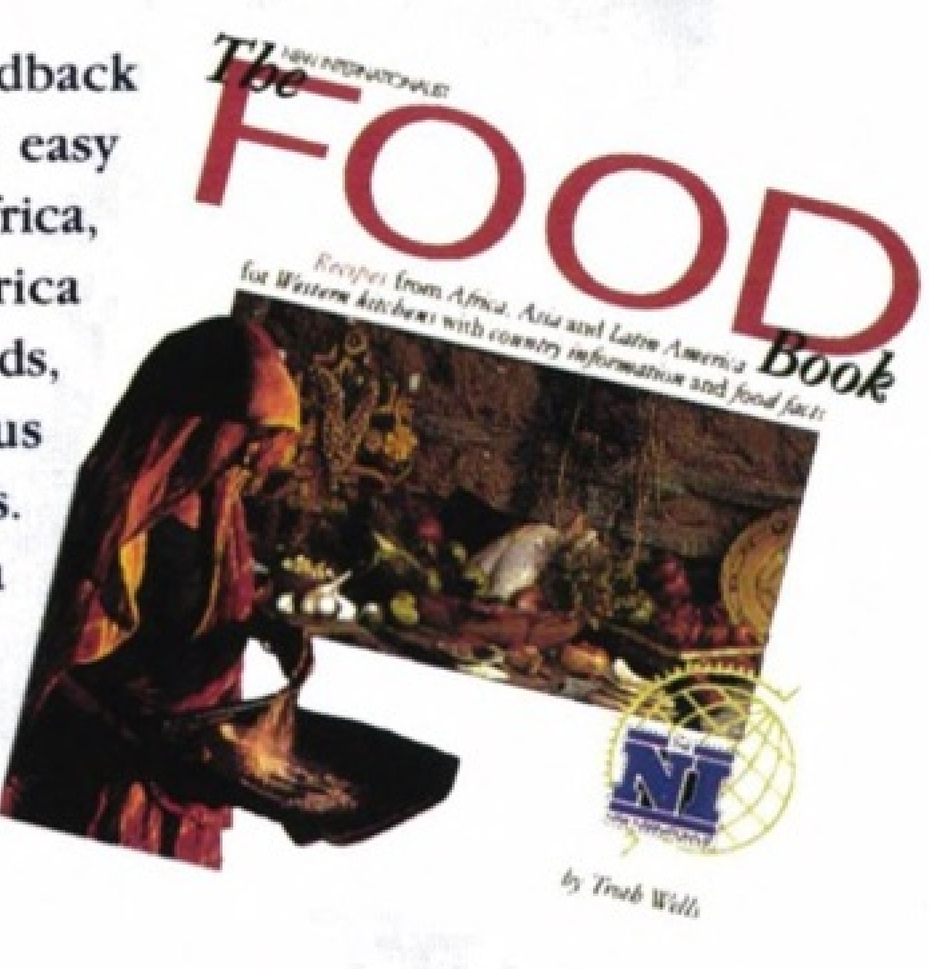
There are 25 bedside tales in this world-wide anthology including animal stories from Botswana and Indonesia, ghost stories from Jamaica and Vietnam, a creation myth from Brazil and many more. Each story is illustrated by one of the finest artists in the field.

Do you know a child who would like these stories? 99 pp.

Size 8³/₄" x 10¹/₂" (23 cms x 26.5cms)

Ref: 01279 **UK £12.99 • Can/US $24.95**

THE NI FOOD BOOK


NEW INTERNATIONALIST
The FOOD Book
Recipes from Africa, Asia and Latin America for Western kitchens with country information and food facts
NI
by Troth Wells

This attractive wipe-clean hardback publication features over 200 easy to follow delicious recipes from Africa, Asia, Middle East and Latin America including sections on starters, salads, meat and fish, and desserts, plus country information and food facts. Numerous illustrations and a ribbon marker. With over 30,000 copies already sold, the book has become a best seller with good reason. 184 pp. Measures 8¹/₄" x 8¹/₄" 21.5cms x 21.5cms).

Ref: 01139 **UK £10.99 • Can/US $19.95**

NATIVE AMERICAN CARDS

Wonderful sepia photo portraits of nineteenth century native Americans. Each picture is coupled with an environmental statement which still has resonance today including:

'Only when the last tree has died and the last river been poisoned and the last fish been caught will we realise that we cannot eat money.'

Cards printed on recycled parchment-style card. Inside is left blank for your own message. Pack of five different large cards, each measuring 5³/₄" x 8¹/₄" (14.5cms x 20.5cms) plus envelopes.

Ref: 01252 **UK £3.95 • Can/US $7.95**

FACE THE NEW YEAR... with a Smile

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
January 1995
NI NEW INTERNATIONALIST The people, the ideas, the action, in the fight for world development
Third World Calendar

COLOURFUL

WARM

VIBRANT

THE 1995 NI THIRD WORLD CALENDAR

The NI Third World Calendar is a collection of twelve lovely pictures by some of the world's leading photographers. The images show the people of the South, their work, their culture and their environment. You'll appreciate the amazing variety of these photographs: from a villager making a bridge over a raging torrent in Indonesia to a cheerful washday scene in Cuba; from a cliff top village in Mali to monks praying before an extraordinary golden rock in Burma; from a Zimbabwean wedding couple to the herding of horses in Mongolia.

Since 1982 this classic calendar has set new standards for its sympathetic portrayal of people in the South. It's an affirmation of our one world - to be enjoyed all the year. It measures 22" x 11" (56cms x 28cms) and comes in a sturdy illustrated carton ready for mailing to a relative or friend.

Ref: 01317 **UK £8.95 • Can/US $19.95**

NEW

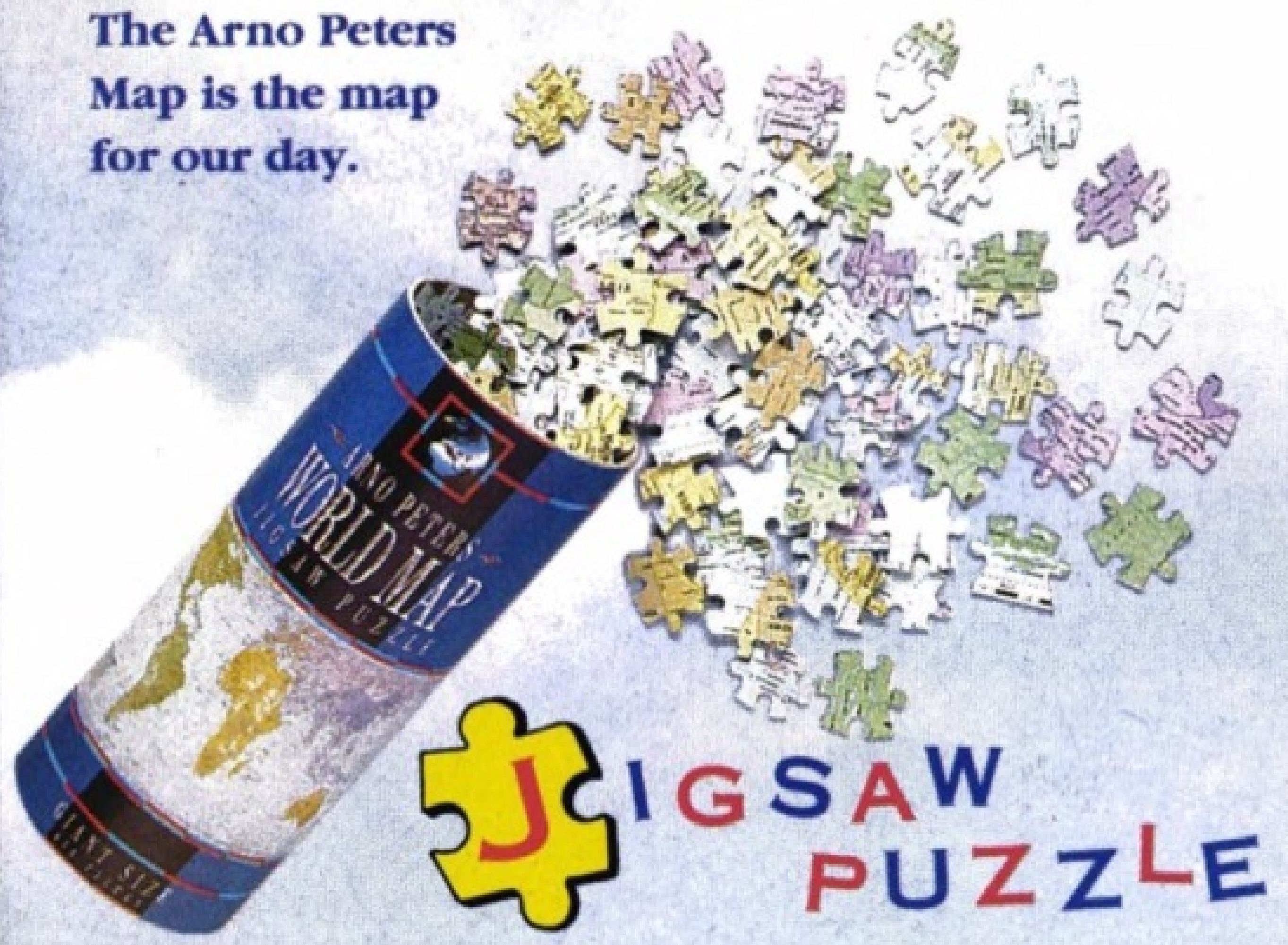
THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PICTURE

Fresh this year, the reverse sides of the calendar photos use pictures and commentary to contrast images from the West with those of the calendar.

ARNO PETERS WORLD MAP

This distinctive map projection of the world vigorously challenges Euro-centric attitudes as shown on conventional Mercator maps - where European countries are shown twice their real size and where the Latin American and African continents are correspondingly smaller. By setting countries in their true relative size, the Peters' projection gives the world's people the most accurate portrayal of their planet.

The Arno Peters Map is the map for our day.



JIGSAW PUZZLE

Something adults and children can make together. Piece together Burkino Faso with Mali, Uzbekistan with Turkmenistan and Afghanistan ... and then try to locate the islands of the South Pacific! It's a geography lesson you don't even know is happening. Both educational and fun. Updated to include the latest international boundary changes. Guide map inside. Measures a big 33" x 20" (84 cms x 59 cms). 650 pieces.

Ref: 02003 **UK £8.50 • Can/US $18.50**

FREE OFFER

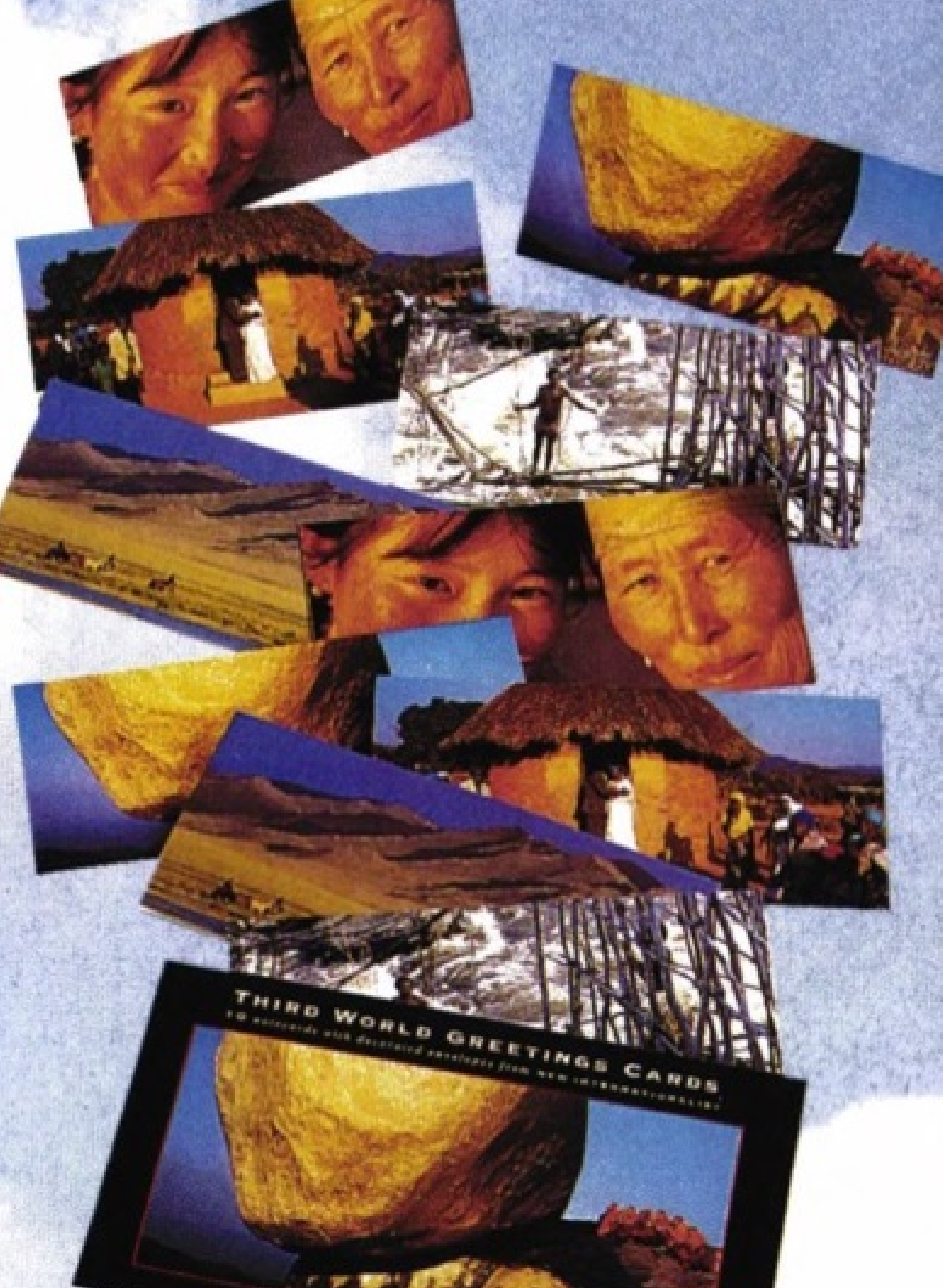
Order three calendars and/or almanacs (shown overleaf) to be sent to one address and claim your FREE pack of 10 full colour Third World Greeting Cards listed below.

THIRD WORLD GREETINGS CARDS

Ten cards featuring two of each of the five most appropriate calendar photos, plus envelopes. The cards are blank inside so they are useful for special occasions all the year. Representing good value, such quality cards normally sell for twice as much in regular stores. Each card measures a generous 8¹/₄" x 3³/₄" (21cms x 9.5cms).

New this year: an attractive large presentation wallet, featuring the greetings card images enclosed, makes this a stunning gift.

Ref: 01333 **UK £4.95 • Can/US $9.95**



NEW

ARNO PETERS WALL MAP OF THE WORLD

WIPE-CLEAN LAMINATED VERSION

Now in easy wipe clean format, this full colour map is an informative and striking addition for any home, office or classroom wall. Includes new states like Eritrea. It is hard wearing, impossible to tear and can be pored over and marked with felt pen. Cannot crease, comes rolled. Will last and last. 33" x 20" (84 cms x 59 cms).

Ref: 01341 **UK £6.50 • Can/US $14.95**